THEORETICAL AND DISCUSSION JOURNAL OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

FEBRUARY 1967

Marxism Today

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

JOAN BELLAMY — AFRICAN ÉLITES—A STUDY OF GHANA

BARRIE STACEY — PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING, EDUCATION AND IDEOLOGY

ADAM SCHAFF — ON THE PROBLEM OF ALIENATION

DISCUSSION:

ADRIAN CUNNINGHAM — DIALOGUE BETWEEN CHRISTIANITY AND MARXISM

A. REMINGTON — DOGMATISM IN BIOLOGY

Monthly 2/-

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Marxism Today

Vol. II No. 2

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Central Books Ltd.,
37 Gray's Inn Road,
London, W.C.1

Subscription rates

Six issues 14s. 6d.
Twelve issues 29s.

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Editorial Comments

ONE of the most impudent assumptions of the Prices and Incomes Board is that the system of collective bargaining between unions and employers has been definitely abandoned. When Aubrey Jones was asked whether the recent statement of the Prices and Incomes Board on Productivity bargaining did not mean the end of collective bargaining, he answered: "Of course". The Government, he argued, must be represented in all future collective bargaining. Mr. Richard Crossman, always anxious to be in the front ranks of innovators (good, bad or indifferent), told a Labour Party conference at Middlesbrough: "Our whole policy is to have full employment, with expansion and fair wages and prices and we have to find the method, for this is a life and death issue. *There has to be in any case bigger inroads by the Government into collective bargaining.*"

This is where the "acquiescence" of the Trades Union Congress, by a microscopic majority, in the Government's policy of pay freeze and credit squeeze has landed the unions.

The incomes policy has gone through various stages. In the first place it was supposed to mean negotiations within the frame of criteria (including the 3½ per cent guiding light) agreed to by the TUC and the Confederation of British Industry.

Then it was agreed that, if the negotiations led to an increase above the norm of 3½ per cent, this could be referred to the Prices and Incomes Board, which had power to forbid payment of any wage increase for a period of three months. Then came the period of the pay freeze when all wages and salaries were frozen, followed by a period of severe restraint when nine-tenths of existing wages and salaries will be frozen. When this expires on June 30th then there is to be a period when, according to Mr. Crossman, there will be "bigger inroads by the Government into collective bargaining".

In the Public Interest?

Bigger inroads presumably than those which were *already* made before the July measures.

There are, for example, the Prices and Incomes Board criteria for productivity bargaining, which are quite likely to frustrate rather than promote agreement. Hitherto a productivity bargain has been designed to save labour time on a particular job or group of jobs. Productivity increased and the workers received an increase in earnings and the employers an increase in profits and that was that.

Along comes Mr. Aubrey Jones and declares that this type of productivity agreement is no good because it does not allow for the reduction of prices. A productivity agreement, he says, must allow for an increase in earnings, an increase in profits and a reduction in prices. It is safe to say that if this is the criterion very few productivity agreements can be applied. Most agreements cover a particular group of workers and not, in the first place, the industry as a whole. Say the printing unions make an agreement on manning, which increases earnings. The Prices and Incomes Board seems to be arguing that such an agreement is invalid *unless it includes a decision to reduce the price of newspapers.* Tobacco workers might make a productivity agreement on earnings. Is this agreement to be declared invalid because it does not envisage a reduction in the price of cigarettes? No group of workers could possibly tolerate increasing productivity on the basis that their gain in earnings must be held at the lowest possible point in order to permit prices to be reduced. The Prices and Incomes Board, if it operates this policy, will be destroying the possibilities of productivity bargaining altogether.

The claim that the Government has the right to interfere in collective bargaining is based on the assumption that it represents the "public interest". This assumption results from forgetting the inescapable fact of the class struggle and class politics. In what sense did, or could, the Tory governments in this century represent the "public interest"? In what sense could a Labour government, succumbing to pressure from its international banker creditors and the American Government, represent the public interest?

Trade unionists have always been chary of government interference with collective bargaining under capitalism because governments would tend to come down on the side of the employers and on the side of industrial peace at any price. It is time that trade unionists everywhere were rejecting the dangerous claim of the Crossmans and the Joneses that the state (which in effect means some state official) has the right to sit in on all wage negotiations.

"Galbraith's Industrial State"

Professor Galbraith's lectures, as expected, received a mixed reception. The run-of-the-mill capitalist economists seem to think that he exaggerated the degree of monopoly in the American and British economies, and argued that competition and the market was playing a very considerable role yet.

We wondered last month whether Galbraith would deal with the burning question of the dis-

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tribution of income and wealth under state monopoly capitalism. This would have corrected the picture of the general beneficence of the monopolies that he was painting in his earlier lectures. He, however, carefully avoided that theme.

In general his contention was that the monopolies and the state were drawing closer together, that a "new industrial state", with some of the traits of socialism, was being born, that the affluence being created by that "state" was such that we would soon be able to pay less attention to economics and more to culture.

The lectures were really a caricature of economic determinism. Humanity was being carried towards a new social order not by economic or political struggle, but by the economic evolution of the monopolies and the growing intervention of the state. This evolution was going on almost without realising it.

Clearly the state and the monopolies are co-operating to an increasing extent, and Galbraith seems to think that this increases the element of control in the whole set-up; but control on behalf of whom? It does not mean that the state is moving to control the monopolies but that the monopolies, with their bureaucrats and technocrats, are participating to an increasing extent in the administrative functions of the state as controllers and not as controlled. This is what needs to be looked at to a greater extent than is being done on the Left at this moment.

Collapse of Social Reform

Whatever the intentions of Brian Abel-Smith, his Fabian pamphlet in the *Socialism: Affluence* series exposes the complete collapse of the social reform policy advocated in the General Elections of 1964 and 1966. This is clearly not the result of the crisis of July 1966. It was evident in the National Plan published a year previously.

In its years of opposition the Labour Party was fond of underlining that personal expenditure was growing much faster than social expenditure, so that the social services were visibly deteriorating. It promised to alter this trend.

The now defunct National Plan, according to Professor Abel-Smith, made "extraordinary little provision for narrowing the gap between private affluence and public squalor".

The National Health Service is supposed to be the best of all social services, but the Professor tells us that "the percentage of national income spent on current public health services in 1962 was 4 per cent in the UK; 4.1 per cent in Norway, 4.6 per cent in Denmark and 4.8 per cent in Sweden. If we were in line with Sweden, Britain would be spending £200 million more on its health services.

It appears also that the proportion of the gross national product devoted to cash benefits in Britain is lower than in most European countries. In the United Kingdom it is 6.4 per cent. In Denmark it is 6.8; Netherlands 7.7; Italy 7.9; France 8.3; Belgium 8.8; Sweden 9.1; Austria 9.2; and West Germany 10.4 per cent.

Professor Abel-Smith combats the idea that an improvement in social services is wholly dependent on an increase in economic growth. This was the thesis of the National Plan, but the Professor points out that it is possible to improve the social services by re-distribution of the existing national income. In its election manifestoes in 1964 and 1966 the Communist Party pointed this out. Obviously there is a case for an all-round increase in old age pensions and children's allowances without waiting for further economic growth. To refuse this is to refuse to reduce poverty.

What Next in Africa?

Readers of our journal may recall that in the autumn of 1966 we organised a seminar on *African Liberation—Next Steps?* in which a number of authorities on Africa participated and read special papers. The discussion covered a number of important aspects of the revolutionary process in Africa, dealing with the role of different social classes, the nature of the political parties, the character of the new states, the questions of external economic aid, the problem of neo-colonialism and the recent counter-offensives against certain African states, questions of ideology and varying concepts of African Socialism, the character of recent *coups d'état*, the role of the working class in the national liberation struggle, the particular character of the African bourgeoisie, the concept of a non-capitalist path and the transition to socialism.

Arising from this seminar and on the basis both of the papers read and of the discussion which took place, a number of contributions on Africa are being prepared for *Marxism Today* which it is hoped will be published in the first six months of this year. The first of these, a study of élites in Africa by Joan Bellamy (who returned to England early this year after the *coup d'état* in Ghana where she had been working for the two previous years), is included in this issue. Subsequent articles are being prepared by Idris Cox on questions concerning African Socialism, by Thomas Hodgkin and others.

La Pasionaria

This month too Lawrence and Wishart have published *They Shall Not Pass*, the autobiography of Dolores Ibárruri, better known as "La Pasionaria", the great woman leader of the Spanish Communist

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Party and the Spanish people in the days of the war against fascism.

Symbol of resistance against the fascist rebellion, she now tells the story of her life. And in telling it she brings again to life the drama and heroism of a struggle which left so deep a scar on the conscience of mankind.

In the first part she deals with her youth as a miner's daughter in the Basque country, with its brutal poverty. In rebellion against domestic drudgery she turns to socialism and communism. With the establishment of the Republic in 1931 she comes to Madrid as a Communist leader and immediately finds herself in prison—the first of many arrests. More than half the book deals with the period of the Civil War, in which she was the inspiration of world support for the Loyalist cause. Her autobiography provides new insights into the operation of the People's Front governments, the alignments, the betrayals, the inner struggles among parties and factions. The entire sordid story of "non-intervention" is recalled, as well as the support of the peoples of the world, in medical aid and in the International Brigades, in face of the massive aid to Franco by Hitler and Mussolini.

It was on the day the fascist generals rebelled against the democratic Republic, July 18th, 1936, that Pasionaria spoke on the Madrid radio: "It is better to die on our feet than live on our knees. They shall not pass!" These words echoed round the world, and now make the title of her epic autobiography.

Bob Stewart at Ninety

On February 16th that grand old man of the Communist Party, Bob Stewart, will be ninety years old. On his birthday Lawrence and Wishart are publishing his memoirs, at 21s., entitled *Breaking the Fetters*.

For a long time many comrades have been urging Bob to write this book and looking forward to reading it. Perhaps "writing" is not the word for it, although many writers adopt the same method as Bob did. He spoke his memoirs on to tape and they were devotedly transcribed by Dave Bowman, the Communist parliamentary candidate for Dundee, Bob's native town. Those who heard the tape will miss Bob's hearty laugh which concluded many of his sentences—but readers can supply their own, for as might be expected this wonderful book is full of humour.

Bob describes how he got into the socialist movement via temperance. Starting out to fight gin, he came to see that the main enemy was capitalism. He was a foundation member of the Communist Party, and his chapters on the negotiations which led to that event, in which he played a leading part, are of very special interest. But so are all his chapters, describing, analysing, commenting on the events of working-class history over a period of getting on for a century.

Before the Communist Party was formed, Bob was one of those who opposed the imperialist war in 1914. Refusing call-up, he was court-martialled four times, and spent a lot of the war in prison. The story of his court-martials is one of the best in the book.

Bob shows up in this book as we know and love him—very wise, very humorous, an indomitable and implacable fighter for the workers' cause, and very shrewd. This last characteristic is exemplified by what he tells of the announcement of the Russian Revolution which came to him in 1917. "Now there'll soon be a world revolution," his excited informant told him. "I hae ma doots," said Bob. But he never had any doubts that the struggle for socialism would finally win, and he closes his memoirs in the certainty that the victory is drawing near.

Biography of Eleanor Marx

Now that Allen Hutt has retired from daily journalism and Yvonne Kapp has finished working on the sixth—and last—volume of Ehrenburg's memoirs, they are to collaborate in the writing of a biography of Eleanor Marx.

We referred to Allen Hutt's long standing interest in this subject in our issue of September 1963, an interest which came to be shared by Yvonne Kapp in the course of translating the Correspondence between Engels and Paul and Laura Lafargue in the late 50s.

Eleanor Marx was organiser, agitator and educator combined. She helped her father in every way until his death in 1883. She organised solidarity with the Communists and the Irish Land Leagues. She was a leader and foundation member of the Social Democratic Federation and of the Socialist League that broke away from it. And she was particularly active in the British trade union movement, especially in its great task at the end of the '80s and beginning of the '90s, the organisation of the unskilled and unorganised workers. She was well to the fore in the Match Girls' strike, and the great strikes of the dockers and the gas workers.

As we wrote at the time, a full-length study of Eleanor Marx and her role in the British Labour Movement has long been needed. And we are very glad, therefore, that Allen Hutt and Yvonne Kapp have undertaken this research.

Their book will entail considerable research in so far as Eleanor Marx's death at an early age, close on 70 years ago, rules out the possibility of finding people who knew and worked with her,

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though fortunately, having cherished this project for so long, Allen Hutt had revealing talks about her with John Burns and Will Thorne as far back as 1939.

The two writers, who have established the whereabouts of original source material in archives both here and abroad, are most anxious to hear from anyone who remembers hearing about Eleanor Marx or has inherited letters from or other material concerning her.

Information from readers of *Marxism Today* will be very welcome and should be sent to the editor, who will pass them on.

Tribute to Andrew Rothstein

Congratulations to Andrew Rothstein on whom Moscow University has conferred an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. No-one merited such an honour more.

There was an impressive ceremony when tributes were paid to Andrew by Ivan Petrovsky, the University's Rector and by many others, including Academician Ivan Maisky (who was Soviet Ambassador to Britain from 1932 to 1943), who recalled that the first time he met Andrew was as "a bright and intelligent schoolboy" in 1912 at the home of his father, Theodore Rothstein.

In a moving reply Andrew Rothstein expressed gratitude to his father, who had instilled in him a love of history with the understanding that, in our times, one had to contribute to it by becoming a revolutionary Marxist; to the British proletariat for the lessons of its slow but stubborn advance towards emancipation; to the working class of the Soviet Union which had been the first in history to break through the yoke of world imperialism, build Socialism in its own country and set out on the road to Communist society; and finally, to the Party of which he was proud to have been a foundation member, and from which he had learned so much in the course of its struggles, its defeats and its successes.

We all know of Andrew Rothstein as Marxist theoretician, lecturer, and writer of history. Some of us know him as well as one who is unreservedly generous in the help he is always ready and willing to give to others engaged in theoretical and historical work.

And we are very glad that Moscow University has paid him this tribute which is so fitting and so well-deserved.

New Dietz Publications

The Dietz publishing house in the German Democratic Republic has always paid special attention to books on the history of the German and the international working-class movement.

We wrote some months ago in these columns of the monumental eight-volume history of the German Labour movement published last year.

Quite separately from this Dietz has been publishing in recent years a series of studies based on lectures given at the Karl Marx Party School.

British readers (alas only those who can read German) will find particularly useful a short work just published in this series by Siegfried Vietzke and Heinz Wohlgemuth on "Germany and the German Working Class Movement, 1919-1933".[1] It treats the stormy years of struggle that followed the First World War, the development of the Weimar Republic, the foundation of the Communist Party, the rise of Fascism and the downfall of the Weimar Republic in 1933. Attached are 150 pages of relevant documentary material including some of the main documents and statements of the German Communist Party from its formation to 1933.

One other recent Dietz publication which will probably be extremely useful to British readers as nothing is available in English in the same detail, that covers the same ground, is a study by Arnold Reisberg on "Lenin and the Zimmerwald Movement,[2] but which is at the same time something of a study of the international working-class movement's struggle against war between 1912-18.

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[1] Siegfried Vietzke and Heinz Wohlgemuth—*Deutschland und die deutsche Arbeiterbewegung in der Zeit der Weimarer Republik, 1919-1933*, Dietz Verlag, 1966.

[2] Arnold Reisberg—*Lenin und die Zimmerwalder Bewegung*, Dietz Verlag, 1966.

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African Élites—a Study of Ghana

Joan Bellamy

COMING on the rapid succession of numbers of independent African states to independence, the present setbacks to some of the democratic and progressive forces which were in the forefront of national independence movements have come as a shock to many people, producing bewilderment and even cynicism. There is, understandably, great disquiet at the way in which some leaders of national movements have quickly come to terms with imperialism as soon as independence has been won, and there is concern at the way in which in other states the army, backed by civil servants and other sections of the intelligentsia, has intervened to overthrow progressive Governments or to forestall the arrival to power of radical parties.

The armies, civil servants, and some educated sections have moved rapidly to the forefront of political life to prevent radical social changes. They are in important strategic positions in the state and political life of their countries and it might be useful to examine some of the factors which lie behind their present political moves, and how their outlook has been conditioned.

The examples used in this article refer to Ghanaian experience with which the writer is most familiar, but they have general application to other countries at similar stages of development.

A vital question now hangs over the future of the newly independent countries. Will they go forward to the next stage of their liberation, throwing off economic domination, or will they remain dependent victims of neo-colonialism?

The first perspective strikes at the very heart of imperialism and holds important implications for the future of socialism on a world scale. A policy for thorough-going social reconstruction requires economic programmes, true, but these in turn demand basic changes in the political, state and ideological sectors of national life, which have been handed on from the period of colonial rule. Foreign imperialism is seriously threatened and will take steps to protect itself, but it has an ally in the internal forces, created and nurtured by it against the day when independence would have to be granted.

Classes in Africa

For Marxists examining the class structure of African societies there are considerable problems. Not the least of them is the lack of reliable statistical data. This is increasingly being collated and it is possible to arrive at some conclusions and estimate the characteristics of various classes and sections.

A second difficulty is that we are faced with the oft repeated assertion, from Africans as well as non-Africans, that there are no classes in Africa. Usually this reflects lack of knowledge about the Marxist theory of classes, linked with a fear that Marxists want to "introduce" class war into the continent. (This is an echo of the belief that Marx "invented" the class war.) It is not necessarily reactionary diehards who believe this; there are even very militant anti-imperialists who support this classless view of African society. There are some rather special features which lend support to their opinions.

Modern classes are small in number and relatively new. Class divisions are not firmly delineated, nor is class consciousness so marked as in older industrialised countries in Western Europe and the United States.

Class struggle in Africa has taken a different form. The African worker—the gold miner, docker, railwayman—is not generally employed by an African capitalist but by a foreign monopoly capitalist firm. His struggles for better wages and conditions bring him into conflict with a foreign employer usually represented by a European manager. His fight for the right to organise trade unions has brought him into conflict with a foreign government. His class fight has so far been inextricably bound up with the struggle for political independence, as part of a broad, united movement which cut across latent class divisions between Africans themselves.

The petty-bourgeois sections . . . the peasants and intelligentsia, small traders and capitalists, also faced the same foreign enemy. The farmer was denied a fair price for his crop, the intellectual denied the full right to education or to apply his skills responsibly, the trader and capitalist subjected to the pressures of foreign monopoly organisations.

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With a powerful common enemy against which to unite, it is hardly surprising that the fight for national independence was rarely seen as a class question.

The Family

There are other unifying factors in African life which need to be considered in more detail than can be done here. The working class is often migratory, and is relatively new. The worker is only recently from the village and does not necessarily see himself as a worker for the remainder of his life. His loyalties and feelings of solidarity are likely to lean towards his extended family which can comprise hundreds of people, sometimes in quite different occupations and varying class positions. Ask a Ghanaian where his home is, and he may well tell you the name, not of the town or village where he is living, but of a place where his family originates, but which he may never have visited. Most of us have had difficulty in understanding what is meant by "a brother" or "sister" or even "father", in African terms of kinship, which reflects the force of the family system still in operation. This system and the traditional communal society of which it is a part still play a powerful part in African life providing for an ethos of mutual help and support, for each of its members, linking the townsman, the intellectual, the farmer, the worker, in bonds of loyalty and frequently obscuring class divisions.

Power and influence derive from a place in the tribal structure, or from a position in the state or political life, and not from the ownership of the means of production. In developing societies, the state initially acts as an accumulator, and intense struggle continues for the ultimate ownership of the means of production thus acquired. If the petty bourgeoisie win this battle, then in the short term, they will, having used the state for their purposes, obtain control of the means of production for themselves. If the working class moves into the leading position, the basis will have been laid for further development and for socialism.

These are only one or two of the reasons why we must approach the problem of African class structure in a careful and flexible way. Increasingly African Marxists are making what must be the vitally important contribution to this question, as may be seen from the discussions at the recent Seminar of African Marxists in Cairo.

Struggles for Leadership

This is an important formative stage in African political life. The national unity created in the struggle for independence is undergoing intensely severe strains as different sections advance conflicting claims on the new states. The character of political life is changing with the movements for national independence being transformed into political parties. In many of them there are bitter struggles for leadership going on, while the organisation is trying simultaneously to fulfil the role of being a ruling party.

In Kenya, the national movement has split; in Ghana the attempt to create a revolutionary, vanguard party, out of the Convention People's Party has been set back by the military coup. In Nigeria, the Federation threatens to fall apart. This political instability which has come as a shock to many staunch anti-imperialists, supporters of the national liberation movements, is being used by reactionaries and racists to "prove" their claim that Africans cannot rule. Their arguments are easily answered, but those who urgently wish to see Africa throw off imperialist domination in all its forms should recognise that there are powerful advances taking place in other states, such as the United Arab Republic, Mali and Guinea, though not without difficulties, and that the setbacks in the other states, while serious, are not in any way final. From these temporary defeats new political alignments and forces will be created.

To safeguard their right to extract raw materials, establish a favoured market for their industrial products, and guarantee safe areas of investment, the imperialists exported a state apparatus and an ideology. One of their most necessary aids was a small section of the indigenous population which could be won over to assist them in ruling the country, keeping the mass of the people docile, and which would, in the independence period, safeguard the interests of foreign capital and align their countries with the imperialist world.

This careful provision for the future, the existence of a reliable co-operative privileged section, is now being put to the test; in Ghana it appears, temporarily, to have paid off.

The Chiefs

There are two important "élite" sections. The traditional élite which derives its power from its position in tribal society, in the forms of communal land holding which still persist, and the modern élite, virtually created by imperialism, which derives its power from its privileged education, which in turn gives its members positions of influence in the state and politics.

The British ruled their colonies wherever possible through the system of indirect rule. European traders of necessity dealt with the chiefs in the coastal areas particularly and when the West African territories became colonies the British Government installed them in the system of government. The main concern of the British authorities was to maintain "law and order", which alone could ensure

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conditions most favourable to trading, and later to safe investments. The chiefs were the most powerful people in their respective tribes and the vast majority of the people, who were attached to a "stool", came under their influence. The chief's function was adapted by the British who made him responsible for keeping law and order and for managing his people, in return for which he received payment and political support from the colonial authorities.

In the words of a British administrator of 1871:

> "It is the worst possible policy to lower or belittle the native kings or chiefs in the estimation of their dependants. They can at a small cost be made the best and cheapest supporters of law and order . . ." (*Great Britain and Ghana*, edited G. E. Metcalfe, Nelson 1964, page 335).

The British authorities intervened in the election of chiefs and could and did de-stool the unsatisfactory ones. Prempeh I, King of the Ashantis, was exiled to the Seychelles for over 20 years.

The chiefs were important, mainly in local government and in an advisory function. In the event of any form of representative government being established they were looked to as providing an upper house.

They were dependent on British rule. Their chieftancy derived no longer mainly from the consent of the people, or from the paramountcy, but from the British crown.

They were consequently often regarded as traitors by the more advanced sections of the national movements, but so long as the mass of the people are linked through their labour, through cultivation, to the traditional forms of land ownership and usage, then the chiefs will retain some influence over them.

With a vested interest in both colonial rule and a backward-looking traditional land-holding system, the chiefs in general played a reactionary part; in particular they resisted threats to their influence which came from new types of leaders, in the independence movements. Initially these leaders were drawn from the intelligentsia. One of the reasons for the success of the Convention People's Party was that it appealed successfully to the people over the heads of their chiefs; it appealed to them as Trade Unionists, progressive youth, market traders, and not as members of particular tribes.

Other Sources of Élite

From the very beginning the colonial authorities were plagued by the emergence of a group which it itself created. It was necessary to have interpreters and negotiators between the European traders, then the colonial administrators, and the chiefs. These men, more educated than the chiefs, acted as translators and often as advisers. They were mistrusted and resented as a potential threat to colonial rule.

Already in the mid-19th century, their presence and influence was feared.

> "It is with kings and chiefs, not with irresponsible natives, however clever or well educated, that Her Majesty's Government must deal" (Metcalfe, op. cit., page 379).

The modern élite grew from different groups, essentially the product of the presence of Europeans and their rule.

We have already mentioned the intermediaries between Europeans and chiefs. Many of them were children of European fathers and African mothers. Speaking English well, familiar with a European way of life, yet essentially African, they were able to play an important part in negotiations with the chiefs.

A further section which provided skilled administrators, for a period for the colonialists, consisted of the freed slaves, returned from the West Indies to Freetown, Sierra Leone.

With the growth of urbanisation, especially on the coast, Africans themselves took to trading and commercial activity. Their relations with the traditional rulers inevitably weakened and they came to form a coherent and well-organised section which gave leadership to a variety of organisations over a period of a century, such as the Fante Confederation, the Aborigines Protection Society, the British West African Congress.

Imperialism Defends the Chiefs

The introduction of cocoa growing, with production for the first time of a cash crop, resulted in considerable litigation about land ownership and use, corroding much of the traditional land-holding customs, and it encouraged the development of a new professional class of lawyers acting on behalf of a plentiful flow of litigants. This is a profession which still attracts large numbers of young people who hope to enter not only the legal profession but politics and business.

The British Government did everything it could to prevent any alliance between the urbanised, commercial élite and the chiefs. Such a combination of traditional and modern élites would have presented a formidable problem for the colonial Government, even in the last quarter of the 19th century.

The British always protected the claims of the chiefs as against the political activity and demands of the intelligentsia or businessmen. They insisted on assuming that the rights of the ordinary African were vested irrevocably in the chiefs, and that their duty was to prevent any undermining of this system.

In 1918 the following important statement of the principle was made by Sir Hugh Clifford speaking in a debate in the Legislative Council:

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> "I do not consider that the bulk of even the urban population is, or for a long time to come will be, educated to the pitch of taking an intelligent interest in such a thing as an election. So few people could do so at the present time, that the grant of the franchise would quite certainly result in Members of this Council being elected by a small specialised class, whose ideas had been borrowed from the political atmosphere of Europe, without any regard to local conditions in the Gold Coast, and the members so elected would possess no possible claim to speak for the bulk of the population, who would not, as a matter of fact, have had any hand in their election.
>
> "For these and other reasons, I feel that the political development of the Colony, is such, that if you were to attempt, at the present time, to give the right of election to the native population, that right would be exercised only by the classes who have obtained an European education, and who have with it imbibed ideas of government which are peculiar to Europe, but which, at the present stage, make no appeal whatsoever to the man in the palm grove, whose interests, under such a system, would not secure the same attention as is accorded today . . ." (Metcalfe, op. cit., page 571).

Even as late as the 1920s a petition of the British West African Congress was rejected on the plea that the signatories were representative only of themselves, whereas the chiefs represented the whole of the people.

By 1934 some progress in united action can be recorded, the chiefs and politicians combining in a petition and deputation on Bills concerning waterworks and sedition.

The uncertain love-hate relationship growing between the chiefs and some of the intelligentsia is revealed in the following speech made in the Legislative Council in 1936 by Nana Ofori Atta:

> "If I listen to these barristers, I often wonder what they really think of the Chiefs. One day they would say to the Chiefs 'you are our Almighty God' and the next day the Chiefs would not be worthy of the respect due to a scavenger . . . it pleases some of the members of the educated classes to see that the Chiefs are ruined."

Élites in Alliance

The alliance between the chiefs and a section of the intelligentsia came in 1950 as the answer to the formation of the Convention People's Party by Kwame Nkrumah. The new Party rejected the exclusiveness of the politicians of the United Gold Coast Convention led by the "élite" politicians. These latter based themselves on the concept of an aristocracy of intellect, who had the right to rule because of their attainments and educational background. They tried to work their way out of isolation after the formation of the CPP by allying themselves with the chiefs and their tribal parties. It was interesting to see how, immediately after the coup, the theories of this group re-emerged, arguing that popularly elected Governments were not a suitable form for Africa, and that rule by specialists and chiefs was more suited to conditions there.

The nationalism of this section of the intelligentsia often found expression in an appeal to Ghana's traditional customs and culture, but rather from the point of view of antiquarian interest than from one of inspiring the movement to proceed from a glorious history to an even more dynamic future.

This reactionary alliance, an expedient in the face of the mass appeal of the Convention People's Party, has re-emerged within the protective framework of the military dictatorship. At present talks are going on about a future constitution. If, finally, the soldiers and policemen can be persuaded to give up power, there will be a reflection of this alliance in some proposal to govern through two houses, a lower one popularly elected possibly, and an upper, elected from chiefs.

Élite Education

The modern élite derives its initial power from its exclusive, European-type education. Present-day education in Africa bears very clearly the marks of its origin in Christian missionary education.

The first missionary on the Gold Coast, Reverend Thomas Thompson, arrived in 1751. Other missions established themselves and their schools in the 19th century. The Government gave grants to them for education and gave them the main responsibility in this field. The education given varied of course, but in general there was little attempt to adapt courses, lifted straight from Europe, to local needs and conditions. By 1942 in British West Africa, 99 per cent of primary education was still being run by the missions. The main emphasis was on Christianity, reading and writing, with a great deal of memory work. It was, of necessity, based on an idealist outlook, non-scientific, with heavy emphasis on the humanities. Secondary school examinations were linked with British University Matriculation Boards to provide a basis for the more privileged student to enter a British University without difficulties.

The courses did not in general stimulate a spirit of enquiry or a challenge to accepted beliefs, but inculcated obedience and the acceptance of mission values.

Education tends still to be dominated by these traditions, even in the Universities. It is difficult to break through the cycle of teachers educated in a particular spirit producing students like themselves, especially in the absence of a strong political party based on a clear ideology. Great prestige attaches to book learning, and manual, practical studies tend still to be despised. There are difficulties in getting

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enough students to enter the science faculties. There is still a mistrust of local University education, often fostered by teachers educated abroad, and "the been-tos" (the students who have graduated overseas) still command inordinate respect compared with the local graduate.

The prestige symbols of the older British universities are often adopted, with students wanting to wear gowns and the members of Senior Common Rooms passing the port (in the correct direction of course!).

Anti-Communism is a very powerful force to be reckoned with in the intellectual and political life of the African states. Given the kind of education, and the character of those directing it, this might be expected, but it often comes as a surprise to Communists themselves. Marxist ideas are very new in the African states in general, and the colonial authorities did their best to exclude Marxist publications and journals. After the coup in Ghana, the military régime tried to stimulate a campaign for the burning of Marxist books.

The kind of idealist, indeed rather quaint and old-fashioned ideas which some of the leaders of the new régime in Ghana express can be seen in the following passage from the speech delivered by the Chairman of the Council of the University of Ghana, appointed after the coup:

> "A University is after all a universal institution, and it will (*sic*) be absurd to think that the purpose of a University should change with its location and time. Throughout the ages all great centres of learning have kept as a sacred trust the role of pursuing truth, even to the bitter end."

Those sections of the intelligentsia which have not broken free from this kind of static, idealist based philosophy, can scarcely begin to grasp the real character of the problems facing their new states. Raised in a generally exclusive atmosphere of a secondary and higher education which is available only to a very few, they come to regard themselves as an aristocracy of talent to whom society owes special privileges.

Achimota College

This is not to say that as individuals they have not worked very hard for their education. Many of them have made tremendous sacrifices to get through school and university, but if they accept the predominant philosophy of their education, this serves to complete their isolation.

Educational developments in the 1920s did not change the content of the curriculum. The British wanted to administer their colonies more cheaply and the educated Africans were pressing for the right to work in the administration.

In 1925, Guggisberg founded Achimota College and soon after introduced target figures for Africanisation of the service. He said "This [i.e. Achimota, JB] will be an institution at which the African youth will receive, first and foremost, character training of such a nature as will fit him to be a good citizen; and secondly the higher education necessary to enable him to become a leader in thought, in the professions or in industry, among his fellow countrymen".

Lugard introduced education in Nigeria based on the same principles. Both men echoed the principle laid down almost a century before by Macaulay in relation to education in India which he said should aim "to create a class of persons, Indians in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals and in intellect".

"Africanisation"

Some of the students at Achimota failed to fulfil Guggisberg's hopes. They became active in the national independence movement, assisted by their higher education to take a leading part. Among these were such leaders as Dr. Nkrumah who, in his preface to *Consciencism*, has a most valuable description of the processes by which colonial students were trained. He writes:

> "Many of them had been handpicked, and, so to say, carried certificates of worthiness with them. These were considered fit to become enlightened servants of the colonial administration. The process by which this category of student became fit usually started at an early age, for not infrequently they had lost contact early in life with their traditional background. By reason of their lack of contact with their own roots, they became prone to accept some theory of universalism, provided it was expressed in vague, mellifluous terms.
>
> "Armed with their universalism, they carried away from their university courses an attitude entirely at variance with the concrete reality of their people and their struggle."

He then describes the other kind of reaction:

> "Finally, there were vast numbers of ordinary Africans, who, animated by a lively national consciousness, sought knowledge as an instrument of national emancipation and integrity. This is not to say that these Africans overlooked the purely cultural value of their studies. But in order that their cultural acquisition should be valuable, they needed to be capable of appreciating it as free men."

It was this last group, leading the national movement and mobilising the power of working-class action, of the youth, of the small trader and farmer, who were accepted by the people. It was the "aristocrats" prepared to compromise with the colonial rulers who were rejected by the electorate.

The targets for Africanisation of the Civil Service included an aim of 319 European officers and 229 African by 1945-46. In fact by then, only 89 Africans

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held senior posts and by 1952 only one Ghanaian headed a department.

For the educated the Africanisation demand was a vital part of their perspective for independence. In the House of Lords in 1942, Lord Hailey expressed their aspirations in the following way:

> "There is no doubt that where we promise self-government to the colonial peoples the first criterion that many of them will apply in judging our sincerity is the extent to which we admit them to our administrative services. Here, in their view, is the substance of power, and it appeals to them . . . and in particular to the educated classes . . . as of more importance than the slow evolution of popular institutions." (Cited Symonds, *The British and Their Successors*, Faber & Faber, 1966.)

The employment of Africans in the administration was not without precedent. Between 1830 and 1898 Africans had held responsible posts but were then excluded and only people of "pure European descent" could qualify.

In 1942 this requirement was abolished and some appointments were made during the Governorship of Sir Alan Burns. It is perhaps interesting to note that Dr. Busia, recalled from exile by the military regime, after the coup, and bitter opponent of the Convention People's Party, was made an Assistant District Commissioner by the British in 1946.

Africanisation, linked with parity, provided difficult problems for the new states, once independence was established. The African Civil Servant is employed on conditions which originally applied to the European, colonial civil servant. The high standards of living and many additional benefits were a feature of colonial rule which Hobson described as a vast system of outdoor relief for the younger sons of the ruling class. These living standards were accepted, indeed, demanded, by the African Civil Servant as of right. For the higher grades salaries reach the upper £2,000 brackets, a house is provided. Long paid leave, travel home, and easy loans for a car, are all important subsidiary benefits, in a society where the average per capita annual income is £90, and where the minimum day wage for a labourer is 6s. 8d.

Civil Servants in Ghana

It is not necessary to develop this argument further to prove how easy it is for the Civil Servant, and the professional workers who have parity with him, to become quite divorced from the problems of the country.

The general character of the Civil Service brings difficulties. The negotiated clauses in the Ghana Constitution relating to the Service aimed to ensure, in Nkrumah's phrase, that Ghana would have "the pattern of civil service obtaining in Great Britain".

This is not what a developing country requires. Economic and welfare programmes call for an increase in the numbers of specialists and administrators. Where the state plays the major role, new demands are made on the Civil Service itself. Skilled people are in terribly short supply, and promotion is relatively quick. The educated sections find their influence and power increases as these developments take place. An acute contradiction arises because the personnel are not in general in favour of a dynamic, anti-imperialist policy or of the necessary democratic changes which need to take place in the state apparatus if these reforms are to be carried through successfully. Tensions grow between the Civil Service and the politicians.

In Britain the role of the Civil Servant as policy maker is carefully underplayed. In the colonial administrations the Civil Servant appeared as administrator, but also as policy maker, as extraordinarily powerful, and indeed he was. It is to this latter aspect that the African looks and consequently resents the power of the politicians who formulate policies, of which he usually disapproves in any case. This resentment is exacerbated because the educated Civil Servant looks down on the politician who often has no formal educational qualifications.

It is the dream of many African Civil Servants to be left to get on with ruling and administering the country, without the impediment of popularly elected politicians.

"Ready-Made" Army

The new state takes over a "ready-made" army from the colonial country which presents problems as complicated as that of the Civil Service.

The first Africans were recruited to the British colonial army at the beginning of this century. It is perhaps of some significance that with one exception, every member of the present military régime joined the Colonial Army or Police Force.

The first African was commissioned during the Second World War. More became officers after 1950, and from 1953 they were admitted to Sandhurst.

William Gutteridge in *Military Institutions and Power in the New States* (Pall Mall, 1964) describes them as follows:

> "They are part of a small élite, they have close contacts amongst civil servants and many of them have enjoyed the same common but in a sense unique experience of training in a closed institution overseas. They are typical in some ways of the new men in their own countries, but are at the same time inheritors of an especial kind of foreign tradition which has come down through the agency of a foreign army and been consciously adapted to the conditions of a defence force under colonial administration."

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The British preferred to recruit illiterates to the colonial army because it was easier to discipline them. They wanted to keep the soldiers separate from the people so that the former could carry out their policing role with as few complications as possible. The main force in the Gold Coast was recruited from the Northern Territories, predominantly Muslim and with a high illiteracy level.

Army officers do not generally have a high level of academic qualifications as perhaps the Civil Servants may discover when disagreements develop. The officers on the ruling committee in Ghana have School Certificates. This small army, heirs of a colonial tradition, is a tightly knit cohesive force, out of sympathy with anti-imperialist policies which weaken their ties with Britain.

There were frequent changes of command, as part of an attempt by the Nkrumah Government to weaken the cohesion. There was the decision to diversify training and cadets were sent to the Soviet Union. This led to the crisis in which General Alexander was dismissed. He wrote in a recent letter to *The Times*, "Ever since I left Ghana in 1961 I have been in private correspondence with officers and other ranks of their armed forces".

A new Military Academy was set up at Teshie near Accra, to train officers at home, and the Workers' Brigade was set up as a para-military trade training organisation, though this latter never fulfilled its proper function.

The army has a powerfully developed sense of discipline, a quality not shared by many other organised elements of Ghanaian life. Efficiency for its own sake attracts many of the younger inexperienced officers. For these new members of the Ghana army, the next period is likely to be full of lessons. They were not generally against Nkrumah's policies, but they resented inefficiency and corruption. If they thought the coup would retain the essential features of this policy but get rid of the political problems attached to operating it, as many Ghanaians did, they will soon develop opposition to their older officers now in control who have allied themselves with the most reactionary politicians and who have apparently come to terms with some of the corrupt sections of the CPP.

If, in common with the forward-looking sections of the intelligentsia, these young officers can be won for a firm alliance with the small left forces, with the organised workers and the small farmers, then the coup can be defeated. If they see the problems simply in terms of personalities and not of policies, then one coup is likely to succeed another.

The discipline and fire power of a western trained, reactionary-led army is a formidable force, and the most powerful political weapon that can be opposed to it is a determined, disciplined political party, united by a revolutionary ideology, working with all progressive sections of the people.

Party and People

At present the chiefs, the reactionary intelligentsia, the army officers, have formed a political alliance, based only on their opposition to the Convention People's Party. It is thoroughly opportunist and self interested and splits and divisions along many lines are clearly possible. Certainly its policies and the philosophy on which they are based can never solve Ghana's problems which she shares with all the developing states.

There is an important responsibility facing that section of the modern élite which worked for progressive development, for the transformation of the CPP into a new type of vanguard party, and for a new alignment of forces. Their training does enable them to give leadership, formulate demands, organise and negotiate, but on certain important conditions. The petty-bourgeois leaderships of the national independence movements became a powerful political force only when they turned to the masses of the people, and especially to the organised working class, small as it was. Many of these young men and women are attracted to scientific socialist ideas, and they can bring the power of Marxist ideology into the mass movement. The danger is that they will not see the need to fight for this democratic alliance, without which they can never strike their roots deep into the political life of their country. The interests of the vast majority of the people of the new states lie still in a determined anti-imperialist course. National unity based on such policies, with the working class playing a leading force and moving towards a scientific outlook, is a necessary prerequisite to the next stage of the national liberation advance. Such an alliance will overthrow reactionary régimes which have been able to take advantage of mistakes and difficulties, and take up the struggle for profound social changes which alone can free the people from poverty, deprivation and dependence.

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Psychological Testing, Education and Ideology

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THOUGH, over the centuries, men have devised numerous ways of assessing, testing and trying out their fellows and young, the widespread use of psychological tests is a twentieth century phenomenon. Today, tests are continuously used in education, psychiatry and psychology and, quite frequently, in personnel management as it is applied in industry, commerce, the civil service and the armed forces. The early psychological tests were simple measures of physical capacities and sensory discrimination. Now there are many different kinds of tests for different groups of subjects and for different purposes. There is no doubt that tests are sometimes used in harmful ways.[1] In recent years national psychological associations have had to formulate guiding principles for the distribution and employment of tests in order to protect members of the public. Unfortunately, such associations cannot enforce the principles in all the circumstances where tests are used. In the USA, because of malpractices with tests, several state legislatures are introducing legal controls.

A psychological test is a systematic, standardised procedure for comparing the behaviour or reactions of two or more people. This definition includes techniques of assessment using apparatus, laboratory procedures, physiological procedures, questionnaires, systematic observation, self-reports, performance tests and systematically collected records in schools, on training courses and on the job. Some psychologists limit the term "test" to techniques which yield a numerical "measure". However, most psychologists do not, and many testing procedures yield only categorisation or verbal description. What distinguishes psychological tests from other assessment techniques is uniformity of procedure and knowledge of the degree of objectivity (or lack of objectivity) in the procedure. A test, then, tells us something about the difference between people at a given point in time. This information only becomes significant when it can be shown that these people differ in the same way, or in a predictably different way, at some other point in time, i.e. when the test provides information about consistent individual differences.

Tests are designed to assess one or a few significant variables from total life activity. The tester tries, in setting the stage for assessment, to create in his subjects a "standard state" of motivation, expectation and interpretation of the task. But however objective a tester may attempt to be, because he is dealing with people in a certain kind of social relationship, the situation can never be completely unemotional and impartial. For instance, in the testing situation there are well-known class and ethnic differences in motivation and expectation. There is a great difference between testing enforced by some authority and testing which results from a client referring himself for examination. A guidance situation is different to a competitive selection situation. Testers bring different attitudes and values to the test situation and, inevitably, communicate some of them to the subjects.

Psychological tests in current use are crude instruments which have utilitarian value in certain fields for certain purposes. In education, for example, tests can be used to (1) compare the performance of children or students in a standard situation (or series of situations) and to study their responses to the situation; (2) compare the different patterns of ability at different ages to deal with verbal, mathematical and other kinds of scholastic problems; (3) provide a standard point of reference in a country where schools, equipment, teaching methods, etc., differ considerably; (4) provide a point of reference as to the range of performance of children and students at different age levels; (5) diagnose mentally defective, backward and pathological children and children with special weaknesses or disabilities, and to study their performance; (6) assess the effects of a particular remedial or educational treatment; (7) investigate the influence of class, familial, ethnic and other social factors on the development of human abilities; and (8) help in educational and vocational guidance. Further, the use of tests should lead to economies in terms of time and resources, particularly human resources, and to more reliability and validity

[1] For example, W. F. Whyte's *The Organisation Man*, New York, 1956, contains a vitriolic attack on the use of personality tests in executive selection in the USA.

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of results, or at least to known reliability and validity.[2] Tests are really used because better alternatives are not available at present.

This is not to suggest that any child's future should be decided on the basis of a few test scores any more than it should be decided on the basis of a few essays or an interview or a teacher's report. Tests (and examinations) rarely tell us anything about how or why children come to perform in the way they do or, in the case of attainment tests, why they do not perform better. To obtain such information well-planned developmental studies must be carried out. Both kinds of information can then be used to guide educational practice. Because of their training in statistical methods and experimental design, psychologists can make a valuable contribution in educational research, especially where the research involves assessment of changes in personality or behaviour.

The Significance of Galton

Systematic experimentation on individual differences began in the nineteenth century. Scientists were stimulated by the ideas of the times to make a great variety of measurements of human characteristics. Most notable among these early scientists was Francis Galton.[3] Nearly a century ago he stated that he would "range men according to their natural abilities, putting them into classes separated by equal degrees of merit and showing the relative number of individuals included in the several classes". Since then there has been almost a century of psychological research devoted to the study of the nature of man's abilities and the possibilities of developing them. In the elaboration of the quantitative psychology of the twentieth century Galton's influence has been a powerful one, and most particularly in the branch of the subject first called mental testing, now usually called psychometrics. At the outset in Britain this development rested on the concern with individual differences aroused by Galton's work and the statistical tools which Galton was the first to utilise.

Galton maintained that individual differences in mental characteristics are primarily inherited. He distinguished between what he called "general ability" and "special aptitudes". He believed that the former is inherited and the latter acquired. He argued that intellectual achievements are due, in the main, to general ability and not special aptitudes. Galton recognised three major sources of individual achievement—cognitive capacities, emotional characteristics (such as interest or zeal) and conative characteristics (most notably "a will to work"). He fixed his attention on the first, believing that a man's "natural ability" must inevitably set the limit to what interest or work can achieve even in the most favourable circumstances. Galton's data suggested to him that individual differences in "natural ability" are distributed in accordance with the normal distribution curve[4] like certain physical characteristics. While pursuing his enquiries, Galton invented ways of assessing physical characteristics, keenness of the senses and mental images which were seminal influences in the development of testing techniques. He also discovered an important research method: the device of comparing the properties of one-egg and two-egg twins.

The form of Galton's thinking was biological and evolutionary. His interest in individual differences was aroused by his travels among primitive peoples and by Darwin's newly published theory dealing with differences among species. His enquiries were largely restricted to the pre-eminent "one in four thousand"; his prescriptions for society were, as a consequence, eugenic in character. He had no patience with the view that "babies are born pretty much alike, and that the sole agencies in creating differences between boy and boy, and man and man, are steady application and moral effort". He objected "in the most unqualified manner to pretensions of natural equality". A contemporary admirer of Galton recently commented:

> ". . . he brought out his first book on the subject *Hereditary Genius*, only a couple of years after Karl Marx produced the first volume of *Das Kapital*. This was a memorable convergence of events, for the two books were both concerned with improving mankind and their fundamental message lies in their alternative interpretations of the evolution of human society, the one depending on the internal element of heredity, the other on the external element of the environment—to be exact, the social environment" (C. D. Darlington).

Galton was a socially unreflective product of his class and age. With his aristocratic outlook he was convinced of the importance of breeding. In the nineteenth century when the power and privileges of the wealthy were coming increasingly under attack, Galton was one of the people who used science to defend the existing social order. He was concerned essentially in justifying on scientific

[2] The reliability of a test is the extent to which the same result is obtained on using the test again on the same subjects under the same conditions. The validity of a test is the extent to which it assesses what it purports to assess.

[3] Sir Francis Galton (1822-1911), a cousin of Charles Darwin, was one of the famous Victorian scientists who never held an academic post. He made separate contributions to the fields of anthropology, anthropometry, genetics, meteorology, geography, psychology and statistics. All readers are familiar with one of his ideas, the use of finger-prints for purposes of identification.

[4] It is a smooth, bell-shaped frequency curve which has important mathematical properties.

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grounds the position of the upper class by proving that its members are innately superior to other people. Though his aristocratic outlook and emphasis on success at a very high level attracted few people, his "scientific" arguments about the nature and distribution of abilities were to be utilised. After some modification they were used by those who were concerned with protecting the interests of the middle classes in the state educational system. In a baser form they were used by racialists to "prove" Aryans superior to other races and the white races to the coloured.

The Binet Scale

At this time, in the final quarter of the nineteenth century, psychology was only emerging as an independent discipline. Mental processes, it was believed, could be accurately observed under standard conditions by a trained investigator. This was the time of the early psychological laboratories. The American J. McKeen Cattell, after visiting the laboratories of Wundt[5] and Galton, carried out a long series of studies in the USA in which he used a battery of simple tests compiled with the aid of Galton. These and other early studies in the USA produced disappointing results and the whole idea of mental testing fell into disrepute.

Then, at the turn of the century, more complex practical tests came into psychology from medicine. Clinicians dealing with mental defectives and pathological cases needed techniques which would distinguish the normal from the abnormal, and distinguish among various types of mental disorder. Alfred Binet was one of several physicians who developed tests which would distinguish between clinical groups and, therefore, be of practical value to the physician, educator and social worker.

In studies published between 1893 and 1911, Binet tried to find out how "dull" children differ from normal children. In 1904, at the request of Paris school officials who had decided to place feeble-minded children in separate schools, Binet produced a test to separate genuinely feeble-minded children from other children. In particular, the officials wanted to be able to locate children from well-to-do homes whom teachers might hesitate to rate as feeble-minded, and to avoid having normal, but troublesome children placed in the separate schools by teachers pleased to be rid of them. The Binet scale was published in 1905. Binet standardised his test problems on a group of children of different ages and constructed from this group an age scale of performance. This "metric scale of intelligence" gave some basis for the comparison of the intellectual performance of children of the same and of different ages, and could therefore be used to diagnose mental deficiency.

Binet was greatly influenced by Galton's work. His view of the nature of abilities was very similar to Galton's and of no great significance. His practical work inaugurated a new phase in mental testing. There was a great demand at that time, especially in the USA, for standard techniques to investigate child development. Binet's scale was welcomed and immediately pressed into service as a classificatory and research instrument. Lewis Terman produced the first Stanford revision of the Binet scale in 1916, and this was to become one of the most widely used of all psychological tests. The First World War, with its massive problems of rapid assessment, allocation and training of recruits, popularised the use of tests. After the War a great deal of work went into their design and improvement. The Second World War popularised their use even further.

Emergence of an Intelligence Test Ideology

In Britain, as could be expected, Galton's influence was most powerful. He had many followers of whom the most notable was Charles Spearman, Professor of Psychology in the University of London. Spearman pioneered the statistical technique of factor analysis,[6] contributed to the improvement of tests and put forward the concept of general intelligence ("g") according to which there is a common element in all intellectual activities. For Spearman, g involves the capacity to see relationships; in his terminology, "the eduction of relations and correlates". He argued that g is possessed by all people in varying amounts, is largely inherited and is normally distributed in the population. In Spearman's theory learned "specific abilities" are very much subordinate to the general unitary trait. Though several psychologists showed that Spearman's data could be interpreted in other ways and an intense controversy broke out, Spearman's theory was to be modified and refined over two decades by a group of psychologists who were highly influential in education. In fact, the "school" exemplified by Galton, Spearman, G. Thomson, P. Ballard, C. Burt, R. B. Cattell and P. E. Vernon dominated the development of educational psychology in Britain during the first half of this century.[7]

[5] Wundt, in Leipzig, organised the first psychological laboratory. It was visited by many psychologists from outside Germany.

[6] Factor analysis is that branch of multivariate analysis which deals with the internal structure of matrices of correlations. Today it is the most widely used of multivariate techniques, and is used in many disciplines outside psychology.

[7] A popular exposition of the viewpoint of this school can be found in H. J. Eysenck, *Uses and Abuses of Psychology*, Penguin books.

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The most important figure currently in Britain is Vernon whose books are widely recommended in training colleges and university departments of education. His admittedly hypothetical theory of human abilities is a "hierarchical" one with a general factor of intelligence (which, supposedly, is largely inherited) of most importance; two major factors—verbal: educational (v:ed) and practical (k:m)—of next most importance; then a number of minor factors and a large number of specific factors. The most recent statement of the theory[8] makes far more allowance for environmental influences in the development of abilities than earlier statements of the theory or the theories of Spearman, Burt and Cattell. Vernon argues that "fairly good predictions of ability in education, industry, or everyday life, can be achieved by g tests alone, and that somewhat more ground can be covered by tests of main group factors". He is not averse to "explaining" military performance in terms of g: ". . . it is by no means fanciful to suggest that the victories of the Jews in Palestine in 1948 over the Arabs (who tend to be more bellicose in interests) was largely due to their superior g and v:ed".

Though Vernon dislikes the notion of "types of people as distinct from types of ability", this structuring of human abilities into three major factors really amounts to a suggestion that people fall into three broad categories. These categories, of course, correspond with the educational division of "public" school, grammar school and modern school, and with the occupational-social division of rulers, skilled functionaries and workers. In the general factor of intelligence the aristocratic preference for breeding over training, for the gifted amateur over the professional, for the all-rounder over the specialist, continues as an element essential in the containment of ability. This supports both the "public" school system and competitive selection for grammar schools. For the mass of people the crucial division is between those whose g is combined primarily with verbal-educational skills and those whose g is combined primarily with practical skills, i.e. between those suitable and those unsuitable for a grammar school education.

It can be seen that Vernon's theory, like Galton's, is a justification of the existing social structure since it implies that educational and occupational divisions correspond pretty well with real differences between people which are determined, to a considerable extent, by heredity. Where Vernon's theory is presented as orthodox, established educational psychology, it provides a theoretical basis both for educational privilege and for educational deprivation. The evolution of intelligence test theory in Britain is a fascinating example of how class prejudices, camouflaged by an array of statistical and technical devices, can be presented as science.

This group of psychologists produced an ideology based primarily upon hereditarian beliefs and a partial interpretation of test data. Until very recently, this ideology was highly attractive and useful to the many politicians, civil servants, academics and teachers who are dominated by educational snobbery and the philosophy of scarcity. The ideology may be summarised as follows. Some innate entity, variously called intelligence, g, general ability and general mental ability, exists in each individual. When good enough tests have been devised this entity can be measured. Once determined it is a highly reliable guide to an individual's development and, therefore, to his educational and occupational performance. Human abilities, by and large, unfold in the course of life. Environmental forces are only of limited significance, so major changes in intellectual ability rarely occur. The ideology also asserts that (1) innate general ability is normally distributed in the population; (2) there are innate intellectual differences between the social classes, people in the lower strata being inferior to those in the higher strata; and (3) the British "national intelligence" or "pool of ability" is declining because people in the lower strata tend to have larger families than those in the higher strata.[9]

The idea of general mental ability or intelligence as an inherited, stable characteristic of the individual, unequally distributed among the classes, was attractive because it makes for educational simplicity, cheapness and inequality. Once and for all allocation to a type of education is much easier and less troublesome than continual subject assessment, individual educational treatment, transfers and flexibility. Fictitious types of children, be they A, B and C stream or grammar and modern, are much easier to deal with than real children.

The proponents of the intelligence test ideology and the people who accept it have continually ignored the abundant evidence that (1) intellectual ability is not a static entity; (2) its development is crucially influenced by environmental factors, particularly those associated with the family and education; and (3) the "national intelligence", if anything, is rising rather than declining. In practice,

[8] P. E. Vernon, *The Structure of Human Abilities*, London, 1961.

[9] As a result of criticism, more complex and sophisticated versions of this ideology are now being published, e.g. C. Burt (1966): The genetic determination of differences in intelligence, *Brit. J. Psychology*, 57, 137-153; C. D. Darlington (1966): *Genetics and Man*, Penguin books; J. Maxwell (1962): National intelligence, *Society*, Welford *et al.* (eds.), London. Vernon's position has changed in the last few years; it is now "middle of the road", whatever that means.

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the "pool of ability" is widened with every new concession to the requirements of an advancing technological society.[10] Statements about the normal distribution of intelligence are meaningless since the shape of the distribution depends on the scale of measurement.

Testing and Education

The British educational system's large-scale involvement with testing began in the 1920s when the Northumberland Education Committee introduced testing into its scholarship examination for grammar school places. Too few children from rural schools had been gaining places and it was thought that an intelligence test would provide information about innate general ability thus giving children from rural schools a better chance. Sir Godfrey Thomson, the man mainly responsible for the innovation, regarded the intelligence test as an instrument of social justice. When the proportion of children from rural schools gaining places rose, he thought his case proved.

Thomson was a scholarship boy himself and, like most of his contemporaries, could only think in terms of the scholarship system. The main assumption underlying the system is that resources for education, of necessity, must always be scarce, so that a division must be made among the children of each age group. A minority are selected and adequately educated in the state system, the majority are condemned to receive a very poor second best. The fact that since the Industrial Revolution Britain has had the wealth to provide an education system which is satisfactory for every child is completely ignored. With the scholarship system, gross inequality of educational treatment is justified in the name of equality of opportunity.

Other authorities followed Northumberland until, by 1944, a majority of grammar school selection procedures included an intelligence test. The 1944 Education Act resulted in tests being used for 11-plus selection throughout the country. However, selection was never based solely on testing. English and arithmetic examinations, interviews and, occasionally, teachers' reports were also used. As the full implication of the 1944 Act became apparent, the educational and political debate intensified and intelligence tests became one of the chief targets of attack for 11-plus critics.

Like virtually everything else in education the 11-plus selection procedure has been organised as simply and cheaply as possible. With regard to the testing part of the procedure, there were just not the trained people available to do even an adequate job within the context of the Act.[11] The outcome was the frequent use of tests which had been hastily designed and were of very poor quality. Every year local newspapers had a field day publicising the worst items that had appeared in the 11-plus intelligence test that year. Politically, the left wing criticised and rejected the intelligence test ideology which was presented to justify the 11-plus system. The right wing criticised intelligence tests because they favour the "superficially clever" (meaning the successful working-class child) and penalise the hard-working child with "character" and the "right family background" (meaning the unsuccessful middle-class child). Unfortunately, all this tended to lead to attacks on psychologists rather than on those who had devised cheap education for the majority of children.

Many psychologists found themselves in something of a quandary. Few accepted the ideology of Spearman, Burt, *et al.*, it was mainly accepted by teachers, educationists, politicians and administrators. Yet defending the use of tests for purposes other than 11-plus selection was frequently taken as a defence of the 11-plus system. Attacking the principle of selection at 11 and the use of tests for 11-plus selection purposes tended to lead to tests being dropped from the procedure, rather than the abandonment of the procedure. This adversely affected the chances of working-class children gaining grammar school places because tests are less subject to social bias than English examinations or interviews.

The controversy over the 11-plus led to the widespread rejection of psychological tests as such by the public at large. However, the question of the uses and limitations of tests is a quite separate issue from the organisation of secondary education. From the early 1950s some authorities operated the 11-plus without using tests. As is well known, tests have been misused and exploited for financial gain by teachers and others because of the 11-plus. But the main point is that such a system is bound to provide opportunities for the lowest elements in and around education.

It is a sad fact that we have a more stratified educational system than we had 20 years ago. It is creating new snobberies and social divisions based upon educational qualifications, e.g. GCE and CSE,

[10] Vernon now contests the view that there is a fixed pool of intelligence which limits the educational standards that can be achieved by groups of pupils or students of a given intelligence test level. However, his outlook is still restrictionist; though his 15 per cent potentially "capable" of university work is a much higher figure than the 1½ per cent of Burt in 1943.

[11] The involvement of so many educational psychologists in 11-plus selection is one of the main reasons why psychology has contributed little to education in Britain.

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university degrees and CNAA degrees,[12] teachers with degrees and teachers with certificates. The system both reflects and helps to perpetuate the existing social structure. It is, probably, more finely attuned to that structure than it was after 1944.

Conclusions

While children are born with different genetic and physiological characteristics, which influence their development, what a normal child becomes depends primarily on his or her experiences and activities in specific circumstances. We know there are powerful social forces which act on intellectual and mental functioning. To varying degrees environments can enrich or impoverish mental life and the process is cumulative. Different families, different class and ethnic groups promote the development of different attitudes, values and motives in children and young people. In school there is often a clash of attitudes and values which reduces the efficacy of the education.

Human personality and consciousness, intelligence and abilities develop, in the course of social living. This means that it is necessary to find out in detail how such development occurs. In particular, we need to know how abilities are formed, how they are structured, and how they are influenced by the forces which impinge on the child both in and out of school. Such information would enable all concerned with education to develop situations and teaching methods which can compensate, at least to some degree, for any child's deficiencies or disabilities. It would also indicate how to organise the experiences and activities of all children to encourage maximum, all-round development.

The intelligence test ideology, based largely upon hereditarian beliefs, is a doctrine of gloom which inhibits any positive statement about the educability of all children. Proponents of the theory have no confidence in the process of education itself. Individual differences in performance are "explained" in terms of more or less intelligence. There is little, if any, interest in what is learned, and the learning process. The outlook is that the majority of normal children are not good at certain approved tasks and are, therefore, innately deficient as people; it is not that any normal child can develop a host of skills, including the verbal-educational ones, given the opportunities and the right kind of education.[13] With this pessimistic outlook goes the extraordinary belief that the deficient deserve a shorter, much inferior education!

We know without any doubt that what a child is taught, how he is taught, and in what circumstances he is taught, have great significance in determining his intellectual and social development. We need a large change of perspective in many spheres of education. Instead of separating the scholastically most successful from other children and concentrating on them, we must give our attentions to all children. When problems occur at certain times we must decide not to make them permanent by completely segregating the slowest children and neglecting them. Many teachers have got to learn to forget the labels of streaming and the tripartite system, to care about all children as individuals and to be willing to guide them to some measure of self-fulfilment.

The different standards of education have protected the 11-plus allocation fraud from exposure. A child is assessed as a failure at 11, or earlier if the primary school streams, is subjected to an educationally impoverishing experience and, accordingly, emerges educationally inferior to the grammar or public school child. What the various types of school do is to condition the child to the existing social structure and to his or her pre-determined position in that structure.

A good deal of criticism of psychological testing has been uninformed and misplaced. It is necessary to separate the intelligence test ideology of a few British psychologists from the techniques of psychological testing which are used in an attempt to assess personality, abilities and attainments as objectively as possible. It is irrelevant to condemn useful, if limited, techniques when they are the best available at the present time. In psychology, as in other sciences, it is necessary to carefully evaluate research and interpretations of research results. But as far as assessment procedures are concerned, what psychologists need to do, and are in fact trying to do, is to improve existing techniques and devise new, better ones.

[12] A really heated debate took place over the question of students gaining CNAA degrees being allowed to use the terms BSc and BA. Eminent academics and administrators argued that they should have to use the terms BSc* and BA*.

[13] Even if it were conclusively proved that human abilities are predominantly inherited this would have no significance for educational organisation and practice.

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On the Problem of Alienation

Adam Schaff

("The Philosophy of Man", by Adam Schaff, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Warsaw and member of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party, was published by Lawrence and Wishart in 1963. The article published below was given as a lecture in a series organised by "Weg und Ziel", the Austrian Marxist monthly, and published by "Weg und Ziel" in its issue of December 1966. It has been translated by Jack Cohen, and several new sub-heads have been added by us.)

"ALIENATION" these days, belongs to the category of fashionable and therefore of somewhat "suspect" words. It is used very often—and just as often misused. Its meaning is ambiguous and therefore unclear. Finally it gives rise to defensive reactions on the part of those who regard the practical expression of this concept as dangerous and who strive to justify situations which, in their view, should be defended. These hostile reactions arise from different modes of thought and practical attitudes, ranging from those who regard it as their intellectual task to eliminate unclarities and ambiguities in language, to those who seek to fight against pessimism and the "philosophy of despair".

Thus amongst the opponents of this term there are people influenced by the traditions of Neo-Positivism and the postulates of the semantic analysis of words, as well as Catholics, and, wonder of wonders, Marxists, who, historically speaking, bear the main responsibility for the popularity not only of the term "alienation" but of the theoretical concepts associated with it.

For in our time, the historical concept of alienation has developed along two separate but closely connected paths. One—and this is the direct line of its development—was Hegelianism which has always affected German Humanism in very diverse ways. The other path was Marxism.

Although Marxism was organically connected with Hegelianism in this respect, its transformed conception of alienation bears special, distinctive features and precisely because of this, has in the 20th century, led not only to the re-birth, but, in recent times, to the astonishing boom in the theory.

Fashions in intellectual matters can embody a more or less accentuated element of snobbishness, but can never, or at least only rarely, be determined by it exclusively. For they are usually associated with the social need for the interpretation of concrete facts, and with newly awakened theoretical interest in certain ideas, an interest which was happily described by Ludwik Krzycki as "the travels of ideas".

The "fashion" in alienation requires a precise sociological and psychological analysis for these reasons. On the other hand, the unclarity and ambiguity associated with the current use of this term should not restrict efforts to make it more precise by using the semantic method. For only in this way will the background of the "fashionable" stamp acquired by this term, by this conception, be clearly revealed, and what is even more important, only then will the perspective of the practical value of the term open out.

And the essential kernel of the problem consists precisely in this: if the social need for the interpretation of certain phenomena makes itself felt, and it is this which conditions the "fashion" for given conceptions—then this is usually a sign that certain problems require illumination in the interests of improved social action. In this connection, an intellectual "fashion" is only a spontaneous—that is, an unconscious—expression of this fact.

Objectification and Alienation

During the course of their lives, men enter into reciprocal relations with one another through the medium of the great variety of their material and intellectual products. Men transform reality in order to live, by producing the most varied array of material goods for the satisfaction of human needs. Men likewise produce intellectual goods which serve to satisfy certain needs which arise at different stages of the historical development of society. Man also creates society itself, for since he enters into certain social relations, he creates the means for communication with other men. In other words, man *acts* in order to live, but he also lives by acting. For man exists for other people solely through his works, and for other people he is what he has made or produced (in the broadest sense of these words). But all human creations understood as acts, and all human works understood as products, are projections of man outwards, since man acts on the basis of thought, and this is one of the features differentiating man from the animal world.

Man's thought is directed to a certain objective and is embodied in an objective product by his actions, that is, into something which exists outside the human mind and outside himself. And this is what is meant by "objectification". In other words,

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objectification amounts to the process of transformation, by means of activity, of a human idea into products—either intellectual or material—which have an independent existence, that is an existence independent of human will and consciousness. It is unnecessary to add—but we will do so for the sake of pedantry—that this process of objectification is the basis, the foundation of the social life of man, not only in the sense of the satisfaction of his varied needs but also in the sense of communication, and with it, of joint social life. It is only by explaining the essence of "objectification" as the process and essential sum of the acts and products of human activity that we can begin to explain the category "alienation".

Here again the point of departure is the observation of empirical facts arising from the social life of man. These are the varied products of human activity. These are the products of individual men, for only such living, concrete, individual human beings exist biologically. But although man exists as a concrete biological individual, he is always a *social* individual, not only in the sense that he is a product of the given society (physically and mentally) but also in the sense that he can only live and survive in society by being incorporated into its relations and into the mechanism of its activities. Human society is also social in this double sense, and the products created by men likewise function in a social way. The mechanism involved in the way they function can vary, but always according to the social relations which determine it.

But observation of social life teaches us that men produce goods—material and intellectual—with certain human needs in mind, and produce them precisely for this purpose, and that under certain essential conditions, the products of human activity begin to function not only autonomously, i.e. independently of the will and intentions of their producers, but even against their will and intentions, thwarting their plans, and begin to menace their producers in one way or another. And it is this that I call "alienation".

Thus, alienation amounts to *the process, arising from the social relations, of the functioning of human products (material and intellectual) independently of the will and intention of their producers, in spontaneous fashion, which nullify the plans and intentions of men and often threaten their existence in one way and another.* Alienation therefore, is the name for a certain kind of functioning of human products under concrete social conditions; a functioning, the mechanism of which slips out of the control of individuals or even of societies in a way which menaces their aims and even their existence. The most graphic picture of the essence of this category is to be found in the story of the Sorcerer's Apprentice, who unleashed forces which he was unable to control.

Now let us consider the mutual relations between objectification and alienation.

Situations of Alienation

These develop in the following ways: objectification is a *necessary* feature of the process of human life. Without objectification—as we have defined it—men could neither exist (material and intellectual production is only a specially qualified form of objectification), nor co-exist (if only because of the problem of communication). Alienation, on the other hand, is not a *necessary* feature of the life process of man (not all human products operate as alienated ones although they have an objective existence) but only a *possible* feature depending on the social conditions within which objective human products operate. Objectification is turned into alienation under certain conditions. In others it exhibits no features of alienation (or it loses them when there is a corresponding change in these conditions). From this we must draw a conclusion of the utmost importance for our further consideration of this matter, namely; alienation processes are a function of the totality of social relations and can either arise or disappear in accordance with their whole structure. It does not, of course, need to be specifically mentioned that this standpoint is especially important for every kind of social action aimed at the conscious remoulding of the relations between men.

In order to bring this into the context of the present day, let us refer to one or two actual and outstanding examples: the discovery, as a result of the genius of man, of how to split the atom, and of automation. These are areas of intellectual creation which undoubtedly open up a new era which goes far beyond the social consequences of the so-called industrial revolution as far as its prospects are concerned. These discoveries which can make possible the establishment of a paradise on earth, threaten mankind with total destruction as a result of the way they operate in given social conditions. We have here a classical example of alienation: the danger is widely understood today; nobody wants to be destroyed either in a personal or a social sense. It would thus be reasonable to assume that *everybody* would want to avoid this destruction. Nevertheless mankind obstinately approaches nearer and nearer to the edge of the abyss. Never has mankind been cast so clearly and so tragically in the role of the Sorcerer's Apprentice as it has today. And this is precisely what I would call a situation of alienation. It is not a question of a name, of a term (if I use the traditional term then it is only because I cannot find a better one), but of certain objective

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social situations which require examination and diagnosis from the standpoint of developing preventive social measures.

Given such an approach, the terminological function of the word "alienation" is very broad. For alienation is the name we give to all these social processes in which the material and intellectual products of men operate in the material social mechanism determined by definite social relationships, not only in a fashion independent of men, but frequently in one which threatens their whole social existence.

This is a broad interpretation of "alienation", but it is sufficiently precise to prevent it being identified with every kind of objectification, or what could be described as social evils.

Self-Alienation

A special problem within the framework of alienation, one which requires special consideration, is so-called self-alienation or auto-alienation. A special type of literature inspired by existentialism simply identifies alienation with self-alienation. This is based on a profound misunderstanding and therefore calls for additional treatment of this problem.

"Alienation" is, after all, the name given to a process in which human products "alienate" themselves—that is, they operate independently of the will and the intentions of the producers. Here the *products* of men, and not men themselves, are in a state of "alienation". To speak of the alienation of *men* involves, therefore, the attribution of a special meaning to this term. It is therefore correct to speak of "self-alienation" in order to make the difference clear. Let us therefore examine those relations and situations to which this term (self-alienation) is applied in the specialist literature.

Chronologically speaking, the oldest intimations of self-alienation are associated with religious self-alienation. The mechanism of this kind of alienation is, of course, based on the fact that man attributes certain human qualities which are his own product, to a supernatural being, raising them to absolutes. In this way certain human qualities (raised to absolutes) such as goodness, knowledge, love, etc., become attributes of the godhead. But in so doing man is robbed of these qualities in comparison with the model of perfection he himself has created. Alienation in the double sense follows from this. First, because human qualities become separated from men and are made into alienated parts of the products of the human mind, which are already operating independently. Second because Man becomes poorer in precisely those qualities which he transfers elsewhere. This conception, which goes back to Feuerbach, can be considered as a primary form of the idea of self-alienation.

There is, also, a much more simple interpretation of this category. "Alienation" is the name of a process in the course of which human products stand in a definite relation to their producers. Such a relation can also exist between man's abilities, capacities, attitudes; or put more generally, between his personality (in the sense of the totality of his abilities, capacities, attitudes, etc.) and a concrete, individual human being, who "embodies" them. This happens to man and his personality as soon as they are involved in the market economy, become reduced to commodities themselves and subordinated to the laws and valuations of the market economy. This situation determines the difference between work and free, creative labour, between doing a job and work as a satisfaction of human need, etc.

This kind of situation has been given various names in life and literature—the commercialisation of culture, the degradation of feelings, scientific and artistic creation to commodities, and so on. Literature (including *The Communist Manifesto*) is full of criticism of the state of affairs where man has to sell everything and must therefore adapt himself to the requirements of the purchaser and consequently lose his "I", his Self; and it is in this way that he alienates himself.

One of the most essential aspects of the Marxist ideal of the "universal man", is the creation of conditions in which men will act in harmony with their needs and inclinations, that is, in which they will produce but not work (only in this context can we understand why Marx considers work as alienation, as "non-human" activity, although he also declares creative activity to be not only essential but "typically human"). In the light of these considerations, the difference between "the real man" and "the actual man"—a typically Hegelian idea, but one which played a considerable role in the thinking of Marx when he was young—likewise acquires verisimilitude. In relation with his being as a species, actual man reveals features of alienation, "the real man" does not. But "the real man" is only an ideal, a model.

Man's Alienation from Society

Up till now we have only considered the problem of "self-alienation" as involving the relationship "man—human personality". But there is also another sense in which this expression is used, one which crops up most frequently in discussions about alienation. This has to do with the alienation of man as an individual from society, a view which usually co-exists with minimal engagement in the affairs of society.

The literature of despair—both philosophical and imaginative, emphasises aloneness, the sense of being lost in the crowd, the absence of any purpose

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in life, etc., etc., which it asserts, confirms its view of life. This outlook contains a great deal of snobbish "posing" and decadence, adaptation to the psychological analysis of sick people, and likewise a kind of élitist reactionary quality. But a real problem is contained in this complex of questions which should not be overlooked, because it is linked with new, negative social phenomena for which "self-alienation" is a splendid description.

Accompanying highly industrialised society we have on the one hand, the rise of huge urban conurbations with all the features and attributes—both positive and negative—of the so-called mass society: on the other hand, a radical disruption of the traditional ties uniting various groups—those of relations, professional associates, neighbours, religious groupings, etc., etc., i.e. the groups which determine the *participation* of the individual in society in a traditional and natural fashion. Large cities, and the culture of the mass society based on them, destroy traditional bonds, but they create new ones, in some ways stronger and more powerful ones. A sense of unity is diffused through the medium of trade unions, sports clubs, cultural associations, political party organisations: a mass culture develops through the medium of radio, TV, etc. The individual person is linked with society by infinitely more numerous ties through this gigantic mechanism than he was previously, both from the standpoint of those which condition and fashion his personality, as well as in his organic involvement with the totality of social culture which make it impossible for him to live separated from its structure, or independently of it. A clearly defined integration and structuralisation of society develops as a consequence, which brings about a greater integration of the individual with society than was the case previously—at least in certain respects. But this does not contradict the simultaneous *disintegration* of social culture which brings about the self-alienation of the individual, the significance of which interests us above all.

This is one factor in the topsy-turvey so-called mass society. One is a small part of society, apart from which one cannot live at all, on which one is dependent in very many respects; but one is an atom without the rest of the people being of much help. And this is the real root of the difference. This is why the link is extremely strong and organic in some respects—weak and diffuse in others. That is why one cannot depend on the support and solidarity of others (with the exception of very special sorts of organisation, such as revolutionary groups, but these are not typical of society as a whole). This is why it is easy to make acquaintances but not friends (this is typical of American society).

But since all this arises from the deeper laws governing highly industrialised societies, at any rate those existing under capitalism, one is not only the *object*, but also the *subject* of this kind of disintegration. In other words, people lose interest in commitment to social problems, concentrate more and more on their own narrow private interests. This, at any rate, is the general tendency. Naturally this does not at all mean that the tendency to participation disappears altogether from the lives of people living in a highly industrialised society. It appears in groups with specific aims, in revolutionary, religious and similar groupings, for example, but these are only exceptions which do not affect the general tendency. Participation, nevertheless, is realised on the social level only when it is a question of the defence of national interests. But even in these cases it is not a question of overcoming the disintegrating tendencies, but of conflicting tendencies within one and the same society, which does not really eliminate the question of self-alienation.

And this is the "rational kernel" of the philosophy of aloneness, of being lost in the crowd, etc. It has two aspects. Both in the sense that we are dealing here with a certain disintegration of society, which treats the individual as something alien while the individual in turn regards society as something alien, something which requires no commitment from him—at least no emotional one. Second, in the sense that an exaggerated anarchism begins to make itself felt in the individual disintegrated in this way and with it a standardisation of life, especially of the intellectual life of the individual caught in the toils of the mass society and of mass culture—a standardisation which threatens the destruction of individuality in ways bordering on the macabre visions of the fantastic novels of Huxley, Orwell and others. This complex group of questions which should be examined in a fundamental way rather than dealt with by defensive reactions, fits into a specific series of problems connected with self-alienation.

From what has already been said it is clear that the problems of alienation and self-alienation must not be identified with one another, and that those who seek to reduce the question of alienation to one of the alienation of man by society, simply do not understand this problem, at least in the context of the Marxist tradition.

Moreover, it emerges from what has been said that the problem of alienation has at least two aspects, and that the current, simplified interpretation is a conglomeration of ideas which obscures the complicated picture of the most important social problem of our time.

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Importance and Meaning of the Concept

We have thus arrived at the end of the process of explanation—even though only in superficial fashion—of those ideas which are of interest to us in our discussion. It is now time to pose the real question as to whether this discussion has any practical significance. The question can also be formulated in another way—whether the category "alienation", which is so much in the centre of controversy just now, can be of use to us in relation to social action. And if the answer is in the affirmative, then in what way?

My answer to these questions is affirmative, and I see at least four areas of possible concretisation of the general thesis regarding the practical significance of the category—alienation.

(a) Let us begin by discussing the value of this category as far as classification and cognition are concerned.

The fact of the existence of the general theory and category—alienation—makes possible the classification of given social situations, the features of which correspond to those we have already described in general as belonging to situations of alienation. As a result, the apperceptive and diagnostic function with regard to ultimate social action is facilitated.

(b) It is precisely the diagnostic function which is important.

The general theory of alienation teaches us that the product of objectification only assumes the characteristic features of the alienation process if the corresponding social relations exist. From this there follows the simple conclusion we have already drawn above, that a change in the social relations leads to the overcoming of alienation, that if the situation loses the features of alienation, the intellectual and material products of men begin to operate in harmony with the will and intentions of their producers. Their operation then loses the features of spontaneity.

Here are some examples:

Commodities in the capitalist market display all the features of an alienated human product. This happens because they operate under the concrete social conditions of capitalism, which are based on property relations. In order to overcome this alienation, which brings with it not only lack of planning in production, and crises, but also unemployment, hunger, poverty, as well as the danger of imperialist wars which threaten human existence, the social relations which bring about the phenomenon of this kind of alienation—property relations in the first place—must be changed. This, of course, was one of Marx's fundamental ideas, the practical consequences of which have determined the line of development of an entire epoch, one in which we still live.

The same applies with regard to the State as an organisation of physical coercion ("groups of armed men" as Lenin says, and corresponding institutions such as armies, police, courts, prisons). This is a kind of alienation, the genesis and operation of which depends on such social relations as the division of society into antagonistic classes on the basis of the system of private property. The conclusion: the way to overcome this alienation and likewise to extend democracy in society is via the changing of the social relations which cause this alienation, the division of society into antagonistic classes. The pre-condition for this is the liquidation of the system of private property in the means of production, the basis for the existence of these classes.

A further example from the classical heritage of Marxism—religious alienation. We can dispense with outlining its characteristics here since they are only too obvious, and advance directly to the practical conclusion: what is necessary to overcome religious alienation is to change the social relations, in the sphere of culture and education above all, at any rate as far as overcoming this alienation as a mass phenomenon is concerned. We are dealing here with a far too complex phenomenon to reduce it entirely to the denominator of the social relations or to guarantee that religious beliefs will disappear finally and completely once the social relations are changed.

Enough of examples. Let us try to generalise the meaning of alienation from the standpoint which interests us. *All alienation can be overcome* (this is naturally a more or less lengthy process) if we recognise the fact that it is socially conditioned and if we change those relations between men which make it possible for it to operate.

(c) This conclusion contains not only the kernel of the category, but also the recognition of its mobilising power from the standpoint of social action, one which is basic to the optimistic character of Marxist Humanism. For if alienation constitutes a social evil (these concepts are not identical because not every social evil is a form of alienation), it becomes clear at the same time that socially active men have always the possibility of overcoming this evil. This is an optimistic outlook, mobilising people for action, in contrast to the metaphysic of evil, at least in certain existentialist versions (those of Sartre, for example) which proclaim the unavoidable triumph of evil regardless of human initiative. The mobilising power of the category alienation is all the more important if we become clear that alienation is a constant social problem independent of the social structure. For alienation is, after all, linked organically with objectification, which is itself a constant and necessary feature of all life processes on the

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human plane. It suffices that certain social relations should exist in order that objectification should begin to operate as alienation. Is there any kind of consistent formula for this change-over? Do we know which social relations help to give rise to the alienation process? In my view there are no such formulae, and consequently there is also no general recipe for counter-measures.

From this there follow at least two important practical conclusions.

First: the struggle against alienation is an unending process, the aim of which is always to overcome a *concrete* alienation and not alienation in general, for this would be Utopian. This kind of activity is not only socially important and comparable to the enlargement of our knowledge of the world, although we know very well that this is an unending process like a mathematical series which seeks to reach infinity. But each concrete stage of this process is important for mankind although we know that it has no end, like the process of healing about which we know that it is important for the human organism to cure it of a concrete disease, although it is reasonable to assume that it may suffer from other diseases at some future time.

Alienation and Socialism

Secondly: it is of extraordinary importance when we begin to consider the problem of alienation in socialist society. While it is true that no general formula exists for the rise of alienation, we cannot exclude in advance that no hitherto unknown social situations and relations will arise which will bring new forms of alienation in their train. One thing remains—that is to explore the most general connection between objectification and alienation and the socially harmful character of the latter. In addition, we understand that alienation is a social phenomenon which can be overcome if we change the relations which have given rise to it. This is no panacea, but it is undoubtedly a most valuable directive for practical action, and this permits us not only to speak of the practical power of the category—alienation—but also to accept it into the vocabulary of practice if one interprets the concept of "good work" sufficiently broadly.

This last idea dealt with leads us to the problem of alienation under Socialism. If given social relations can always lead to the degeneration of objectification into alienation, then the question arises as to whether Socialism, as a social formation, is likewise governed by these laws.

In view of the well-known character of the problem it would be trivial and unnecessary to put this question, if it were not for suggestions which emanate from certain of Marx's earlier works, those of "the young Marx". At that time his view was that the elimination of economic alienation would automatically, so to speak, bring about the end of all other forms of alienation. One can interpret this point of view (liberally) in the sense that Marx was only concerned with the forms of alienation which derive from private property and which will disappear along with it. One can also assume that here Marx is really formulating a more general view on the subject of alienation. If this is so, then we must say, quite simply, that he was mistaken. His later, more mature works permit us to doubt whether he continued to adhere to some of the ideas about alienation which he formulated in his youth and which were more or less Utopian in spirit.

When we speak of alienation under Socialism we have to bear in mind the two stages outlined by Marx—the lower stage, Socialism, and the higher stage, Communism. These differ from one another fundamentally with regard to their genetic connections with capitalism, and therefore with private property and the division of society into classes.

If we take Marxist ideas as our starting point, it is a commonplace that Socialism *has not completely overcome any one of the known forms of alienation—not even the economic one*. For apart from the fact that from the standpoint of Marxism, the State and the Bureaucracy constitute, by definition, one kind of alienation (they still continue to exist and must continue to do so under Socialism), there are the obvious problems of the continued division of society into classes, the differences between mental and manual labour, between labour in the villages and that in the towns, and so on. And even in the case of the foundation of foundations, that is of economic alienation, the problem of property still remains to be resolved, since for Marx the alienation of private property was not simply a negative principle to be realised by means of nationalisation, but also, and probably first and foremost, the positive principle of socialisation; for socialisation alone makes it possible for *all citizens to become joint masters in their own house*, for otherwise the transition to Communism, to the "free association of producers", is not possible.

Thus it is clear that in the light of Marxism, the continuation of the process of alienation in the Socialist stage is theoretically tenable. But if it is so in fact, then it cannot be excluded that certain phenomena of alienation (for example, bureaucracy, or the personification of the function of superior physical power) will be temporarily accentuated in the new conditions, or that new, hitherto unknown forms of alienation can arise. This cannot be contested theoretically; in the light of the facts it is clearly impossible to do so.

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Alienation and Communist Society

What can we say about Communism in this regard? From one point of view what one can say about it at present could be regarded as immaterial. Despite illusions which were fairly widespread during a certain period, we can now assert quite definitely that we are still a very long way from a society in which Communism will have really been established, and only such a society would be of interest to us here. This can be shown to be true if only because of the fact that Stalin's thesis that Communist society could be established within the framework of a state system, with a corresponding apparatus of physical force and bureaucracy, must be rejected as an unadulterated revision of Marxism. We must consequently return to Marx's theory that Communism can only be victorious on a world scale, that only then, at least theoretically, can we bring about the elimination of the state and of armed conflict, and create a material basis which will make possible the transition to the distribution of goods on the principle of "to each according to his needs" since otherwise there is always the threat of a return to "the old swinishness" as Marx terms it, in new forms.

We can therefore outline the foundations, or if one prefers it, fundamental principles, of the new Communist society. We have still far to go before we achieve it. And because the forms of transition to the new structure will be different from those we have known up to now, especially in the highly industrialised countries, the form of this future society on a world scale will undoubtedly be highly differentiated and we cannot say very much that is concrete about it just now.

Nevertheless, we can and we should—be interested in certain problems connected with alienation even with regard to these remote future times.

It must be stated at once that from the theoretical point of view, the development of forms of alienation in this kind of society cannot be excluded. For since it (Communist society) cannot exist without the objectification of human activity, it follows—as we have said above—that certain processes of alienation can arise, if only temporarily. One can, for example, anticipate in advance that the "free association of producers", as Marx called it, will face great difficulties in fighting against the possibilities of alienation as far as the apparatus of administration, planning and production is concerned, since these bodies, bearing in mind their international character in the conditions of the future and the necessity for very high technical qualifications on the part of their members, will exhibit a natural tendency to stabilisation which will already bear within itself the seeds of the danger of alienation.

Difficulties will therefore definitely exist, and likewise the possibilities of degeneration into processes of alienation. On the other hand, most perfected means for dealing with such situations will also exist—including the use of programmed, electronic computers.

The particular problem for such a society will be the question of the participation of its members in the collective life—in other words, the struggle against any and every form of self-alienation. What is involved here is the fashioning of the personalities of the people of the new society—which must oscillate between the Scylla of anarchistic individualism and the Charybdis of the destruction of human personality.

But whatever we say about this fascinating subject, still shrouded in the future, really belongs to the sphere of science fiction. It is better therefore to keep quiet about it and simply to try to preserve an understanding of the vitality of these problems.

As against this one thing is certain, and within the framework of our discussions this is decisive: that is, that the category of alienation will maintain its practical value in the future also. Without considering the problems associated with it in the activity of man in Communist society, it will not be possible to establish such a society, or if it is established, to maintain and develop it.

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Discussions Contribution on:

Dialogue between Christianity and Marxism

Adrian Cunningham

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COMING towards the end of a discussion has its advantages, but reading Alan Ecclestone's piece I began to wonder if I had not left my long-delayed contribution a bit too late. For I too had the same misgivings as the series developed that mutual politeness and enthusiasm was doing service for the real work needed, that attempts at dialogue could easily become merely a swapping of travelogues, brisk and breezy glimpses of far horizons without the energy and seriousness required for their conquest. If the dialogue is to be fruitful then the first danger to be watched against is an over-optimistic expectation of immediate results, especially in Britain, and a consequent disillusionment. It would be best perhaps to see this series as a rough prolegomena, a preliminary survey of the field which would not be expected to yield any very definite conclusions. I shall thus limit myself to a few observations which may clarify where later work might best situate itself.

Earlier Approaches

Alan Ecclestone makes exactly the points about the importance of John MacMurray's work which I should have attempted, for it is certainly one of the best places for christians to start their thinking about the socialist implications of christianity, and one of the places where some of the "neuralgic points" for dialogue can be found by both sides, and an indication of the possible common ground. Almost as interesting as the work itself, however, is its neglect.

For MacMurray's work most directly related to the relations between marxism and christianity was published thirty years ago. And not only his work; around the same time there were signs of a significant and sustained interest on the christian side—from some of the German religious socialists who fled Nazi dictatorship, the most notable and still relevant of them being Paul Tillich; from a quite different position there was (for a while at least) the American Reinhold Niebuhr, and from France the collection of essays by Berdyaev, Mauriac and others—"Communism and Christianity".

Anyone going back over these and the many other books and articles published cannot but be surprised at the amount of interest and the number of really interesting studies among the more ephemeral. But this period closes with the 1930s, and part of the reason for the decline is to be associated with the general movement of the times. Again, in the late 1940s and early 1950s there is another crop of books, though this time of a less obviously sympathetic kind and of a generally lower standard, and again it peters out. I think if we trace attempts at understanding back to the crucial period of the 1840s when Marx, Feuerbach and Kierkegaard were formulating what have remained among our principle preoccupations—socialism, the secularisation of religion, existentialism and phenomenology—the same pattern will be found. Not only periodic interest at both practical and theoretical levels, though always confined to a minority, but also and more worryingly a repetition of many of the same lines of approach, difficulty and possibility at each point. The discussion seems to have gone round and round each time, starting afresh with no real sense of continuity.

New Possibilities

One element in this circularity has been that until recently socialists have been, on the whole understandably, not very interested in the christians either as socialists or interested sympathisers and have had the awkward task of working on their own. Also, until the last few years the positions of socialists and christians, and more especially communists and catholics, were rarely anything but overtly and bitterly hostile. To put it at its most crudely realistic level, I see the present tentative openings springing

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initially from the realisation that neither side can hope to submerge the other (and to put it even lower, one might have to add, not yet anyway). The places where interest has been strongest are Italy and France, where it is being realised that any hope for a strong and stable socialist majority must include some substantial support from catholics, and Spain where both Church and party are seeking some sort of *modus vivendi* for the period after Franco when it is at least conceivable that either could go under. Some of the long-term material influences on the catholic side are the simple failure of anti-communism even to preserve a pseudo-identity for a religion which has steadily lost the support of the working classes; the general re-thinking of function as traditional missionary structures break under progressive decolonisation; the increase of indigenous "progressive" clergy in the Third World; the partial decomposition of many of the traditional overtly reactionary social forces aligned with the church; and lastly, the hesitant relaxation of relations with East Europe in the post-Stalin era.

Precisely because of this material shift of the two groups, the pressure in at least some areas to come to terms with one another, we have for the first time the objective possibility of progress. At the same time the fact that this is a pressure and not some kind of impossible miraculous mutual enthusiasm should lead us to expect at the practical level a fair number of ups and downs, opportunist temptations and set-backs on both sides. To think otherwise is utopian. The important thing is that on at least some fronts discussion should still be possible and cumulative. Whether it is a communist attack on catholics in the East, or a catholic attack on communists in Latin America which is taking place, the new situation and the convergence of aim that might be theoretically established will I hope make maintenance of open contact at some levels easy.

Different Traditions

This raises a further point: the distinction between theoretical dialogue and practical relaxation and possible co-operation. Of course, both sides should be committed to seeing theory and practice as a dialectical unity, but precisely because the unity is dialectical it will obviously not be uniform at every time and place: indeed it is the mistaken attempt at uniformity which has often been disastrous for both groups in their own ways.

While it is quite possible to use marxism and christianity as generic terms, any useful thinking about their possible relationship will always have to specify particular times, places, situations, people. For example, one would need to bear in mind the different traditions, histories, organisational structures, and theological emphases of the various christian denominations. Or to take just the catholic church, its *Weltanschauung* and social role will be clearly very different in the GDR, Spain, Chile, or Ceylon—and within each country the disposition of social forces within the church will vary. France has had a varied tradition of catholic movements of the left for over a century, Britain has not. In each case the kind of dialogue possible or desirable will necessarily vary.

And the same is true of the other partners in the dialogue. There are a variety of marxist traditions and contemporary positions often mutually hostile but all with claims to being revolutionary socialists, and christians will, like other people, vary with respect to which grouping, tradition or party they find themselves closest. With each particular grouping further discriminations need to be made. To take the Communist Party, there is a major difference between its role in the East European states and in those states where it is an oppositional or minority force; and it will again vary with particular historical-social situations, or with regard to its relations with the Eastern European communist parties. It might for example be an important fact that the major interest in dialogue has come from Italy and France where quite large elements in the Party have over the last few years adopted a critical attitude towards Eastern Europe. My own response would vary accordingly: in South Africa the obvious place for the christian might be in the CP, in France and Italy there might be a close association, yet in Hungary—as a socialist and not necessarily as a catholic—my beliefs would be hostile to the party.

To make this more specific still, in Eastern Europe I would myself see dialogue as primarily pragmatic, a set of collisions and confusions between government and church apparatus (exacerbated by conditions of industrialisation where the church is basically peasant orientated) which have to be adjusted for the sake of both sides. Yet I would be equally critical of both sides; from my own point of view the governments are very vulnerable to radical socialist criticism, and the church is often little more than an unchristian social anachronism. I would certainly want to help in any dialogue that was possible, but, for the time being at least, being quite clear that the overall situation was one which both as a socialist and as a christian I had to oppose. In fact in some of the socialist countries, the left minority among the christians and the left wing (though I suppose we might disagree about this!) of the party find they sometimes have more in common with one another than either has with its official apparatus. This kind of attention to specific factors must be kept in mind if dialogue is to be fruitful.

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In Britain

What then of the situation in Britain? We should all have enough in common to need no summary here of the specific political problems of the left in the world's oldest capitalist country, of the massive cultural drag on the combative ability of socialism. The christian position however needs one point particularly to be stressed: Britain has never had a christian democrat party or a christian trade union structure. Thank God! is the only possible reaction. But there are at least two consequences which make dialogue here very different from almost anywhere else. First, christians are basically and officially apolitical; the churches certainly play an important political role of a stabilising conservative kind, but the level of political consciousness as such is very low indeed. Without identifiable christian political structures you do not get that polarisation of christian political thinking and action which occurs, for example, in France. So the first, rather dismal problem of a christian who is a socialist is the arousing of political consciousness; he is not able to take it for granted and move more quickly to political action. (There may possibly be some advantages in this situation: the existence of a christian democrat party in Germany has not led to any significant polarisation within the churches; there it may even have worked in the opposite direction.) The second consequence is that it is thus very difficult to see what practical content dialogue can have; there is not a christian political structure with which marxists can co-operate to do anything. As I see it, dialogue in Britain will refer for its practical content to its wider connexion with the dialogue going on elsewhere, and the major effort here will necessarily be of a largely philosophical or theoretical kind.

Some Problems of Theory

This need not however be merely eclectic, for there are problems which both groups analogously share. One with some practical application is the lack in Britain of any serious study of the sociology of religion or even more importantly its cultural and ideological history. A major failure of marxist thinking can I think be located here: its view of religion even as secular fact is massively oversimplified; religion is usually disposed of as idealist projection, in intolerable situations, or as the mystifying veil of respectability thrown over capitalist society.[1] Certainly this has and does play some part in many forms of religious belief, but the point has little use as an analytical instrument in such a general form. For example, the fact that a church (especially catholicism) may often be completely heterogeneous in its class composition would frustrate any attempt to analyse it in straightforward basis-superstructure fashion: the question of the relative autonomy of ideologies is raised, and the problem of the mediations between the various forces at work, and the variety and respective weight of those forces—class, individual and group psychology, social aspiration, historical background, unconscious mystification, etc.

In a different context Mike Long's apparent belief in the possibility of an unmediated relationship between man and nature, which I thought had gone out with Feuerbach, points to the same crux in marxism over mediations. To analyse collaboratively the actual role of religious beliefs and organisations in society in detail would be of obvious use to both sides, and would raise for examination and possible resolution some awkward points of marxist analysis.

Other focuses for dialogue might be found in a disciplined approach to common problems of teleology or eschatology. In marxist terms: is not objectivation often covertly subsumed in alienation, so that the end of alienation is presented as the end of the conflict inherent in objectivation? That is if dialectical movement stops then there are no human beings, and if it does not but is endless then every stage is merely relative to the next and the "final goal" does not exist. Yet much marxist theory and moral energy seems to me dependent upon the idea of achieving this end; how does one re-think this if the goal constantly recedes: complete relativism would seem to castrate the energy and point of struggle; and also there is no inherent reason why each stage should not be reversible. Analogous problems exist for the christian with reference to the kingdom of God: (whether it is conceived of as in this world, or somewhere else) if salvation is equally possible in every age then why is it important that the kingdom be built through history? Perhaps both sets of problems could be related to the question of dialectical movement, whether this is a linear movement from a dialectic of nature to the human, which is basically a reflection of the natural, or whether dialectical movement is primarily a human phenomenon, and the discontinuity of man and nature more important, as the christian would believe.

A third possibility would be to work on the question of belief. This is clearly a major, perhaps the major problem of any christian belief, but it does have marxist analogies; that is communists often seem to be surprised when I ask them *why* they are communists, and no amount of talk about the inevitability of communism is relevant to the mysterious nature of their fundamental belief, choice, option or wager.

[1] I've always liked the polemical shaft in the *Communist Manifesto*, "Christian Socialism is but the holy water with which the priest consecrates the heart-burnings of the aristocrat".

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On these three topics what might emerge is a fruitful relationship between the historical analytic which is best represented by marxism and the more existential orientation of much christian thought, for they all involve problems of mediation—between social historical forces, ideological cultural formations, and personal and group values and reciprocities and goals. The point of a dialogue is not meant to be conversion, but an essential part of it is a willingness to expect change within as well as between the groups involved. Approaches to what one might call a group-historical-existential perspective would seem to me both good marxism and good christianity.

Dogmatism in Biology

A. Remington

LATE in 1948 Lysenko[1] made his triumphal, power-backed statement on "The Situation in Biological Science" and in the few years following that it was the tragic lot of many British Communist scientists, along with others in the non-Socialist world, to act as apologists for, if not, as in some cases, outright supporters of the line on biology laid down in that report, i.e. the general theoretical assessment made of the main trends in biology, particularly in genetics, and the practical decisions for Soviet biology which were then taken. These included a number of demotions and promotions affecting leading Soviet scientists, the closing down of certain institutes and the branding as alien and unscientific of the theory and practice of the great and flourishing branch of biology known simply as genetics, in which, at that time, theoretical concepts built on the original ideas of Mendel had a virtual monopoly. In his vituperations against this science Lysenko described it as Mendel-Morganism, which was, in fact, a more accurate short description of the concepts of that school of genetics as they were in 1948.

Today it is not difficult to understand how such things could have happened. But up to ten years ago it was exceptionally difficult, if not impossible, for any good communist, who was not a professional geneticist, to suspect what we were being told about Lysenko's "Michurinist Biology", particularly as some of his strongest critics regarded him as an honest, if fanatical, man. The case was put to us as primarily a scientific one, but with ideological and political implications, which no Marxist would, in any case, rule out, now as then. The better the science the greater its impact on human practice and life in general (it should now be added, with emphasis, *at some stage*). One of Lysenko's trump cards was the alleged, if it was not at that time, veritable sterility of Mendel-Morganism in the sphere of practice and particularly in agriculture. The trap that he and some of us fell into was to expect a new science to immediately pour out a stream of practical innovations as the sole means of justifying its continued support. It is ironic that at that very time some fantastic changes in practice were being wrought by the application of atom splitting, a phenomenon harnessed as the culmination of a long series of the most academic of theoretical and experimental studies, reached but a few years before.

The Lysenko Controversy

It is a tribute to the rapidity of advance of science since the second world war that many of our younger scientists and Marxists are not very familiar with the issues and arguments of the Lysenko controversy which made world-wide, front-page news less than twenty years ago and which was among the world's most important scientific disputes. For two decades Lysenko was perhaps the most discussed and most controversial figure in the world of science.

Non-Marxists, anti-Marxists and non-communist Marxists may be able to dismiss Lysenko, but for Marxists belonging to the Communist political movement this is not possible, if only because, at one time, many of them were his strongest champions. Sooner or later they have to learn the bitter lessons and discover the major errors which led so many of them, including the most experienced, to support what were fundamentally unscientific claims. The havoc wrought by their misguided actions has to be repaired. Continued dogmatism has to be exposed and its recurrence prevented by the cultivation of true Marxist study and scholarship as a source of information and guidance for those who undertake the responsible and dangerous tasks of political leadership, whether it be of states or parties.

Lysenko described himself as a Michurinist and distinguished himself from the Mendel-Morganists, who constituted for him a hostile trend in biology.

[1] Lysenko, T. D. (1949): *The Situation in Biological Science*, Foreign Languages Publishing House.

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He claimed that there were two main trends in biology: Michurinism, founded by Michurin, a Russian plant breeder and horticulturist, and derived from Darwinism. In his opinion, fundamentally opposed to Michurinism, and Darwinism, was Mendel-Morganism, initiated by the work of Gregor Mendel on the inheritance of a number of simple characters in peas. It is not clear whether Michurin would have embraced Lysenko and other self-styled Michurinists. However, it is clear that the thinking of Michurin, who achieved world-wide respect and acclaim, and Lysenko, was similar in that they both placed great emphasis on the inheritance of acquired characters, thus subscribing to a Lamarckian view of evolution. Mendelians, and those who succeeded them, attached little, if any, importance to the role of the inheritance of acquired characters and many denied its existence, making strenuous efforts to demonstrate its non-existence by both experiment and argument.

Thus Lysenko was involved in one side of an age-old controversy which, from time to time, has been argued with considerable heat, bearing as it does on the fundamental question of materialism versus idealism. He plumped for the inheritance of acquired characters and in doing so could be presented as taking a consistently materialist stand against those who argued its impossibility, and offered no more than natural selection of random mutations in its place. With some justification, Marxists have, in the past, accused Western scientists of eclecticism in philosophy. Such an attitude is undoubtedly much more common than an explicit thought-out philosophical position and it leads to a failure to state clearly what are frequently good ideas. Marxists have been far too ready to condemn this on its face value, perhaps for purely formal reasons, and thus save themselves the time and trouble required to find out the intended meanings of the scientific generalisations of others and the full facts on which these are based. Lysenko was guilty on both counts.

Phasic Development of Plants

Lysenko's early work was concerned with the laws of growth and development of plants which he eventually described in a generalised form in his Theory of Phasic Development of Plants. Whether his ideas were wholly or partly original is really beside the point. He did give prominence to certain facts which had an important bearing on the handling of crops, expressing them in a down-to-earth way with which there can be no quarrel, although the extent to which these facts were put to successful practical use is now difficult to assess.

Lysenko's ideas on phasic development were derived from observations made in the course of highly practical studies designed to select farm crops. Such studies naturally involve the observation of the role of cultural conditions, i.e. the changing environment. For, as everyone who has ever brought up a plant knows, given healthy seeds, cuttings or other starting material the successful rearing of the plant depends on the conditions of culture to which it is submitted. The conditions for the successful growth of a plant were described by Lysenko as its requirements. Thus varieties of plants which could only complete their development after passing a set period of their early life at a low temperature —winter cereals are an example of this—were said to have a cold requirement. He found that for a given plant variety this period was precisely defined both in terms of time and the necessary range of temperature needed. He described this stage, which usually lasted for a matter of weeks, as the vernalisation phase. For some plants the temperature required for vernalisation is quite high. So that the vernalisation treatment is not correctly described as cold treatment.

This type of general physiological information has an important bearing on practical crop rearing and Lysenko must be given credit for taking a leading part in the systematic study of vernalisation phenomena. His investigations led him on to conclude that the cultural conditions could be controlled in such a way as to bring about the conversion of one variety of plant into another. As he put it, the heredity of the plant could be transformed, or as Mendelian geneticists put it, one or a number of mutations could be selected by suitable controlled changes of the plant's environment. The kind of change he claimed to achieve was the transformation of a winter wheat into a spring variety. The former has low temperature vernalisation requirements; the latter can be vernalised at higher, spring temperatures. Thus a winter wheat, which must be sown in the autumn if it is to mature the following summer, could, after transformation, be sown in the spring and mature in the summer of the same year, while retaining some of the desirable properties peculiar to the original winter wheat. Lysenko asserted that he had transformed the winter wheat into spring wheat. Mendelians offered the alternative explanation that the original winter wheat seed contained a proportion of spring wheat which was selected by the treatment to which Lysenko submitted it. Many of the results of Michurinist experiments seem to be open to similar alternative explanations. Unfortunately Michurinists in general, and Lysenko in particular, were so convinced of their own interpretation that they were unwilling to participate in experiments designed to test the rival interpretations.

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Graft Hybridisation

Michurinists also made great play with what they described as graft hybridisation. They claimed to affect permanent, heritable modifications of a plant by grafting it on to the roots of another variety or species of plant. Undoubtedly modifications were, and still can be obtained by this means and a number of different explanations, all equally flimsy, are offered for them. Michurinists again had no doubt that these phenomena resulted from a changing of the heredity of the modified plant and were therefore a demonstration of the inheritance of acquired characters.

Unfortunately, Lysenko has now become highly and very widely suspect. Consequently it should be said that work on grafts carried out by other well-known experimenters, whose reputations are still untarnished, for example Michurin himself, and the French botanist Daniel, have been claimed to show the inheritance of acquired characters. Granted that Medelian critics had a deep-rooted, almost instinctive, resistance to this kind of interpretation, nevertheless it must be said, in all fairness, that the kind of criticisms they made had far greater force than has ever been admitted by the champions of Michurin Biology.

There are many interesting and important effects to be obtained by grafting plants, some of which have long been made use of in agricultural and horticultural practice all over the world. Most of these effects will require a great deal of study by modern methods before they will become at all well understood and the question as to whether any of them can be inherited may have to remain open for a long time to come.

Viral Intervention?

Some of the Mendelian critics of Michurinism suggested that some of the effects of grafting, which were claimed to be heritable, might be explained by the transfer of plant viruses across graft unions from the root-stock to the scion (cutting grafted on to the root-stock). For it is known that viruses can bring about marked changes in the structure and general appearance of an infected plant and that some of them are seed-borne, i.e. they can be transmitted in the seed from one generation of the host to the next. The plausibility of this kind of alternative explanation has increased with time. At no time could it be dismissed out of hand. It is difficult to see how such virus effects could have been entirely excluded in the experiments conducted by earlier workers like Michurin. In his day biological knowledge of viruses of any kind was slight and biochemical knowledge of them almost non-existent. Even now, when there have been some twenty years of very active and many-sided investigations in this general field, plant viruses are only beginning to be understood in terms of cell physiology. To dismiss the possibility of viral intervention suggested by Mendelians, as was done by Michurinists like I. Glushchenko, could only be the result of unscientific, dogmatic thinking. The only way to eliminate the possibility of viral effects would be to work with virus-free plants, which hardly seems practical, even today, if only because it is still impossible to be sure when a plant is entirely free from viruses. Some Michurinists argued that what Mendelians called viruses were either something quite different or simply did not exist. This was true only in so far as viruses were little understood even by those who believed in them, but that very state of ignorance demanded far greater caution and open-mindedness than was displayed by either Michurinists or by the more rigid Mendelians.

The views outlined above are the better-known and more controversial ones put forward by Lysenko and his school. In addition, he propounded a number of principles concerning the relations between plants as they grow in the field. These might be broadly described as ecological theories and led him to propose a number of novel planting arrangements for certain crops. He was later concerned in a certain amount of animal breeding and, of course, wrote broad theoretical expositions of his views covering the whole of biology. All had the same chauvinistic assertive and provocative assurance, that same ex cathedra ring, to be found in much else that was written in the same period in the Soviet Union.

Rethinking

In Britain, after 1948, the scientific battle went through two main stages: an immediate, brief period, during which almost every professional geneticist in the country declared his opposition to Lysenko, with J. B. S. Haldane making a valiant, but short-lived attempt to reconcile the two views. This was followed by a prolonged period of quiet rethinking among those who continued to attempt to justify the views of the body of self-styled Michurinists led by Lysenko—and a slow change of heart on the part of most of them.

The period of digestion of the meal, which we had bolted down rather hastily at Lysenko's table, gradually led to the emergence of some new and qualifying ideas. For example many of his opponents questioned the validity of his experimental methods and results, an opinion we had dismissed as beneath serious consideration until the shortcomings of some of the Michurinists became apparent from a study of the original literature and personal contact. Many of them had low standards of evidence and avoided the use of experimental controls demanded by Mendelians by the doctrinaire assertion that Mendelian theories were wrong and so such controls

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were unnecessary. It is a measure of our immaturity at that time that we failed to seize upon this very striking feature of Lysenko's thinking. This probably arose from our general over-estimation of the quality of Soviet science and our assumption that all Lysenko's generalisations were based on a body of scientific evidence far superior to any to be found outside the USSR—a qualitatively new kind of scientific evidence in that it embodied many results obtained by Michurin Clubs, Collective Farms and such organisations of the people—something impossible under capitalism.

It is clear now that Lysenko, or whoever did or vetted his writings for him, was a very adept hand at the dogmatic use of Marxist generalisations. Many of the statements in "The Situation in Biological Science" must have come straight out of The Textbook of Marxist Philosophy. They were not, in many cases, generalisations of scientifically observed facts. Re-read today, after many re-readings over the years, they are still exasperatingly apt and helpful but, in most cases, only as hypotheses, speculations, guides and in some instances just indications of lines of investigation waiting to be pursued. What is positive in Lysenko is probably his expression of agricultural folk wisdom, a rich compost of farming experience of centuries made up of empirically acquired knowledge, inspired guesswork, art and green-fingers know-how to which from time to time additions of strictly scientific material have been made. In this respect he closely resembled people in his sort of position here at home who, when it comes to genetics, often only differ from him by making a dogma of Mendel-Morganism instead of a kind of neo-Lamarckism, which is the speciality of the Michurinists. Perhaps, as Marxists, we can make some contribution to the understanding of why it is that both these groups of applied scientists have had their outstanding successes and how they can be stimulated and transformed by guidance from the more vigorous and modern sciences still concentrated in universities and other academic centres. This was the sort of future envisaged by Lenin for Michurin and his school. Michurin's self-styled champion, Lysenko, did little towards its realisation.

In the really revolutionary struggle in biology for the emergence of modern physiology based on biochemistry, biophysics and genetics, Lysenko has, in practice, found himself on the side of reaction in spite of many eloquent statements emphasising the importance of knowledge of the metabolism and physiology of plants and animals. In fact he has not used modern methods of this kind in his work and, we understand, has impeded the work of others in these directions. Again we are reminded of many of our own practical biologists in the fields of medicine and agriculture who have played, and are still playing a similar inhibitory role.

Criticism Grows

The strength of criticism of the serious shortcomings of Soviet Michurinists has been growing for some time. In 1960-61 a comprehensive series of three articles by Pierre Boiteau[2] in *La Pensée*, the French communist bi-monthly review of the arts, sciences and philosophy, which were, in general, sympathetic to Lysenko and his adherents, were, at the same time, strongly critical of Michurinists' lapses into dogmatism, their failure to recognise the solid achievements of Mendelian Genetics and their reluctance to study organisms by the modern techniques mentioned above. In one form or the other, criticism of Lysenko never ceased in the Soviet Union and, for example, Boiteau quoted an article by the Soviet philosopher G. V. Platonov[3] published in 1958, in which he said that we must recognise that Michurinist biologists, who up to the present have considered the organism as a whole in its interaction with the environment, and who have achieved a number of successes by this method of *synthesis*, lag behind their opponents in the *analytical* study of living organisms. It is necessary to make a break with the idea that the impossibility of reducing an organism to purely physical and chemical phenomena relieves biologists of the obligation to study the physics and chemistry of living things or permits them to leave this to physicists and chemists only.

Some, at least, of the surviving victims of the worst stage of persecution of ideologically impure biologists in the Soviet Union have been rehabilitated and as the political situation has improved those seeking the reversal of the 1948 decisions have met with more and more success. But it seems to have taken the fall of Krushchev to open the way for decisive measures to be enacted. Only after that was Lysenko removed from his key post. At about the same time a number of official and semi-official statements appeared attacking the worst excesses of Lysenko and his followers.

There is little doubt that the striking successes of the most sophisticated and up-to-date version of Mendel-Morganism, molecular biology, born and bred in Western Europe and America, did a great deal to expose the grave weaknesses in Lysenko's position. While it rejected the crudely idealist and dogmatic formulations of Mendelism deriving from Weismann's idea of the germ plasm, molecular biology has strengthened the central concept of the

[2] Boiteau, P. (1960-61): *La Pensée* (Nouvelle Série), No. 93 p. 37, No. 94 p. 68, and No. 95 p. 36.

[3] Platonov, G. V. (1958): *Voprossy Filosofii*, 11 p. 120,

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gene and, in the short space of ten years, has shown that this notion is a very fertile one. It has made superb advances towards establishing the chemical character and mechanism of action of genes and other types of organising macromolecules such as viruses. The interpretations of the striking facts revealed by this new approach require the most careful study. They could easily degenerate into dogma, like the ideas of Weismann and, in the long run, they must be evaluated by their contribution to practice. Also, Marxists have a right to examine the new concepts and any conclusions drawn from them and to criticise them from the general standpoint of dialectical materialism, but without invective and only after full consideration of *all* the facts and other views and interpretations, i.e. after a scientific study, putting a point of view.

Welcome Changes

It may indeed be no accident that, in the six months after the resignation of Krushchev, events moved very rapidly in the Soviet biological world. At about the time of the removal of Lysenko, proposals for a decisive move to a better state of affairs were being made at a high level. In December 1964 an article by the plant physiologist Academician A. L. Kursanov[4] appeared in *Pravda* entitled "From Molecular Biology to Selection". It recognised the great contribution made by orthodox geneticists and deplored the severe loss to Soviet genetics caused by the actions of those who were hostile to Mendelism for politico-ideological reasons, misguided scientific reasons or both. He also paid due tribute to work of direct practical value done by applied scientists, among whom there are many Michurinists. He made a number of proposals aimed at bringing the results and procedures of modern biological sciences to bear on the great problems of practical biology, particularly in agriculture.

In the first place these would entail applying the results of biochemistry, biophysics and cytology in the study of the physiology of organisms, their proper role. This article by a very prominent biologist made a break with the bad past and proposed, in the most conciliatory manner, plans for that fusion of all healthy trends in biology which is so necessary. Certain other contributions to the recent Soviet discussion appear to err on the side of a somewhat doctrinaire counter-attack, defending Mendel-Morganism, in a sweeping way, from all and any criticism: how can a theory which has produced so many valuable results be idealist? But at some stages the theory *was* blatantly idealist and, in its more developed and effective forms, shot with inconsistencies which may not be unconnected with the earlier idealist formulations. One powerful way of correcting these faults is to examine their logic and growth, their connections and origins—a legitimate field for dialectical and historical materialism. This is a much needed task of scholarship which still remains to be done.

The process of restoration of a normal state of affairs in Soviet biology was carried a step further in an article by the editor of *Pravda*, A. Rumyantsev,[5] in which he condemned the past practice of drawing scientific conclusions in deference to temporary considerations. He said that the Party is against over-simplication and attempts to ostracise this or that trend in research on the grounds that it is not directly connected with practice—"The highest criterion of Party spirit is not speeches in support of the Party but successful practical work that benefits the Party and the Soviet people. It must be confessed that there have unfortunately been instances in which the greatest trust was placed in those scientists and artists who talked the loudest although they contributed little or nothing to our society and although they made no scientific discoveries and produced no brilliant, talented works of art that would win recognition from the people."

This and much else is a most welcome sign of the return to a better state of affairs. However, much remains to be done and particularly, as far as those outside the Soviet Union are concerned, in the direction of recognising the immensity of the harm done both to individual communist scientists, and others, and to whole sections of Communist Parties in some Western countries.

[4] Kursanov, A. L. (1964): *Pravda*, No. 354, December 19th.

[5] Rumyantsev, A. (1965): *Pravda*, February 21st.

Published by the Communist Party, 16 King Street, London, W.C.2, and printed by Farleigh Press Ltd. (T.U. all depts.), Watford, Herts.

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